

# WATERTOWN

## Public Arts Master Plan



"The Time is Always Right." Ruth K. Henry.

Prepared for the Town of Watertown  
by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council

December, 2020





# Acknowledgements

The Watertown Public Arts Master Plan was brought to life through the generosity and participation of nearly 600 people who live and work in Watertown. Individuals of all ages and walks of life contributed content to the planning process through interviews, participation in focus groups, attendance at public events, and completion of a Public Arts Interest survey.

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Watertown and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. MAPC staff worked with the Department of Community Development and Planning, the Watertown Public Arts and Culture Committee (WPACC), and an ad-hoc Watertown Public Arts Master Plan Advisory Committee that included members from the WPACC, representatives from Watertown Public Schools, and arts and cultural businesses and nonprofit organizations.

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# Overview

## What is public art?

Public art is any type of art intended for public spaces or the public realm, and often reflects and responds to social and political issues, the natural environment, and local culture or heritage. It energizes and activates people and places, and it can enhance a community's vitality, social life, and livability by fostering a sense of belonging, helping people make meaning of their surroundings, and building relationships in a community.

Public art comes in many forms. While it may conjure images of granite pedestals and bronze statues peppered throughout parks, modernist sculptures plopped in wind-swept plazas, or murals splashed on neglected walls, public art is extremely diverse. Public art can be temporary or permanent and includes a wide array of forms and media, including performances, festivals, street furniture, signage, artwork integrated into architecture and landscapes, digital media, and displays of technology, color, and light.

Beyond its location and siting, public art is characterized by values of openness and exchange. Traditionally, public art has been defined in universal terms: art that must appeal to everyone in a community, or to all people who use a space. However, a more expansive, contemporary definition argues that the "public" in public art is never singular or static. For example, a public art project slated for a school might be conceptualized and produced by students for students as the primary project stakeholders. Unlike art made primarily for personal creative fulfillment or private enjoyment, public art projects are typically created with co-creators and/or audiences in mind, and with an eye toward the multiple experiences, perspectives, and opinions that these collaborators and participants bring to the work.

## Why a public arts master plan?

A public arts master plan is intended to guide the commissioning, creation, selection, and ongoing care of public art in a region or city. A public arts master plan offers many things. It can:

- Articulate shared values that can guide commissioning, creation, selection, and maintenance processes.
- Establish a transparent commissioning process and selection criteria to ensure that public artwork reflects the experiences and desires of the publics who will encounter the art.
- Formalize policies to fund and care for art in the public realm over the long term.

To these ends, this public arts master plan document provides guidance on:

- **Establishing programmatic priorities that align with Watertown's public art values.**
- **Establishing a Public Art Authority to help manage and guide decision-making.**
- **Instituting selection processes and criteria; a transparent management and administrative structure; and policies and procedures for the selection, development, installation, maintenance, and funding of public arts.**
- **Involving designated staff, town departments, and other partners.**

### Public Arts versus public art

The use of the term public arts in this document signals the importance of an expansive view of the wide diversity of form, discipline and context of arts and culture in Watertown's public realm – a view that extends beyond some of the more traditional forms of public art.



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# Executive Summary

## **Brief History of Public Arts in Watertown**

Over the last two decades, the people who live, work, learn, and play in Watertown have shaped a culture of public arts that reflects a vision of a more inclusive, vibrant, and connected public realm nurtured through a commitment to participatory processes. This plan recognizes and builds on these previous efforts while also identifying new opportunities for public arts to enhance Watertown's open spaces and unique location along the Charles River, highlight its complex history and heritage, and honor and celebrate its cultural diversity, past and present.

Several resident-led projects provided the impetus for this plan and its vision for a public arts program that integrates arts into the public realm and advances shared civic values of diversity, inclusion, and social cohesion. Since the late 1990s, Watertown residents have developed and supported several public arts projects across the community, with a strong focus on youth participation. In 2013, the volunteer, ad-hoc Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee (WPACC) formed to carry this work forward and realize the vision of a more inclusive and attractive public realm in Watertown.

To continue the momentum of the Committee's work, the Town embarked on a public arts planning process that would expand the conversation about arts and culture to a broader community audience and establish a plan and framework for leveraging public funds to support future public art initiatives. Collectively, these previous projects have helped pave the way for the public arts program envisioned by this plan: one that fosters new relationships and resilient social networks across Watertown's neighborhoods and communities.

## **Vision and Goals**

This plan envisions a public arts program that leverages artists' unique abilities to act as connectors across generations, cultures, and geographies. It aims to support artists in pursuit of inclusive public projects that nurture the creative potential—and honor and engage the cultural experiences—of Watertown diverse residents, and in which all residents are empowered to take an active role in shaping Watertown's public cultural life.

## **Implementation during COVID**

These implementation strategies for launching a Watertown Public Arts and Culture Program were developed and refined prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the pandemic has caused significant disruption to municipal governance and civic life, initial steps toward plan implementation are still possible and encouraged. The need for shared meaning and connections among residents has grown under the constraints of social distancing. Increasing coordination among the Town and local arts and culture anchor organizations through implementation strategies three, four, and five below will ensure that the arts and culture assets in Watertown remain strong and viable throughout the pandemic.



## Implementation Strategies

### **1 Integrate Arts into Planning and Community Development**

Establish a staffed position in the Department of Planning and Community Development to support the development of public arts projects and initiatives that advance the Town’s community development goals, as articulated in the 2015 Watertown Comprehensive Plan, particularly those pertaining to development and preservation of affordable housing, enhanced connectivity and open space, support for neighborhood retail and small businesses, and improvements to the public realm that enhance mobility and livability for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

### **2 Establish Policies and Metrics that Align with Program Values**

Establish a Public Art Policy with standards and guidelines for the acquisition and management of the Town’s Public Art Collection, guidelines for site and artist selection, processes for ensuring equitable and inclusive public participation, and requirements for ongoing evaluation and tracking of participant demographics for all facets of the public arts program.

### **3 Build Lasting Partnerships Among Municipal and Civic Stakeholders**

Foster relationships and partnerships among Town departments (particularly the Department of Public Works and Parks and Recreation) as well as public and private entities (particularly the public schools, public library, and community-based and cultural organizations) to ensure that public arts projects and programs support and strengthen community life and are integrated into everyday experience.

### **4 Support and Strengthen Community Ties**

Mobilize and strengthen existing networks and organizations at the heart of Watertown’s cultural and community life. Focus on investments in arts education and public arts initiatives in Watertown public schools, and develop partnerships with community-based arts and cultural organizations to seed projects that highlight Watertown’s unique neighborhoods, historic and cultural heritage (including its Indigenous cultural heritage and industrial heritage), and cultural diversity.

### **5 Ensure a Variety of Funding Sources for Arts and Culture**

Cultivate funding streams that can support an array of public arts initiatives, including semi-permanent, temporary, and ephemeral projects and programs. This should include a percent-for-art mechanism that can support the integration of durable (semi-permanent and temporary) artworks in public buildings and facilities, as well as sponsorships and grants for innovative partnerships, festivals, and other opportunities that activate the arts in the public realm.



## Values Guiding the Master Plan

The values for this public arts plan reflect a commitment to integrating the arts into everyday life in ways that are inclusive and accessible. Collectively, these values evoke a commitment to artistic experiences that are woven into the fabric of everyday life, that offer multiple points of entry to members of the community as partners, participants, and audiences; and that honor and engage Watertown's historic, cultural, and natural assets.

The following guiding values for the Watertown Public Arts Master Plan were articulated by members of the Advisory Committee, developed by attendees at the first public forum, and refined through conversation with the Advisory Committee:

### Foster Diversity and Interaction

### Bolster Creativity in Community Life

### Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown's Past, Present, and Future

### Make Connections to Nature + Sustainability

### Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments and Partnerships

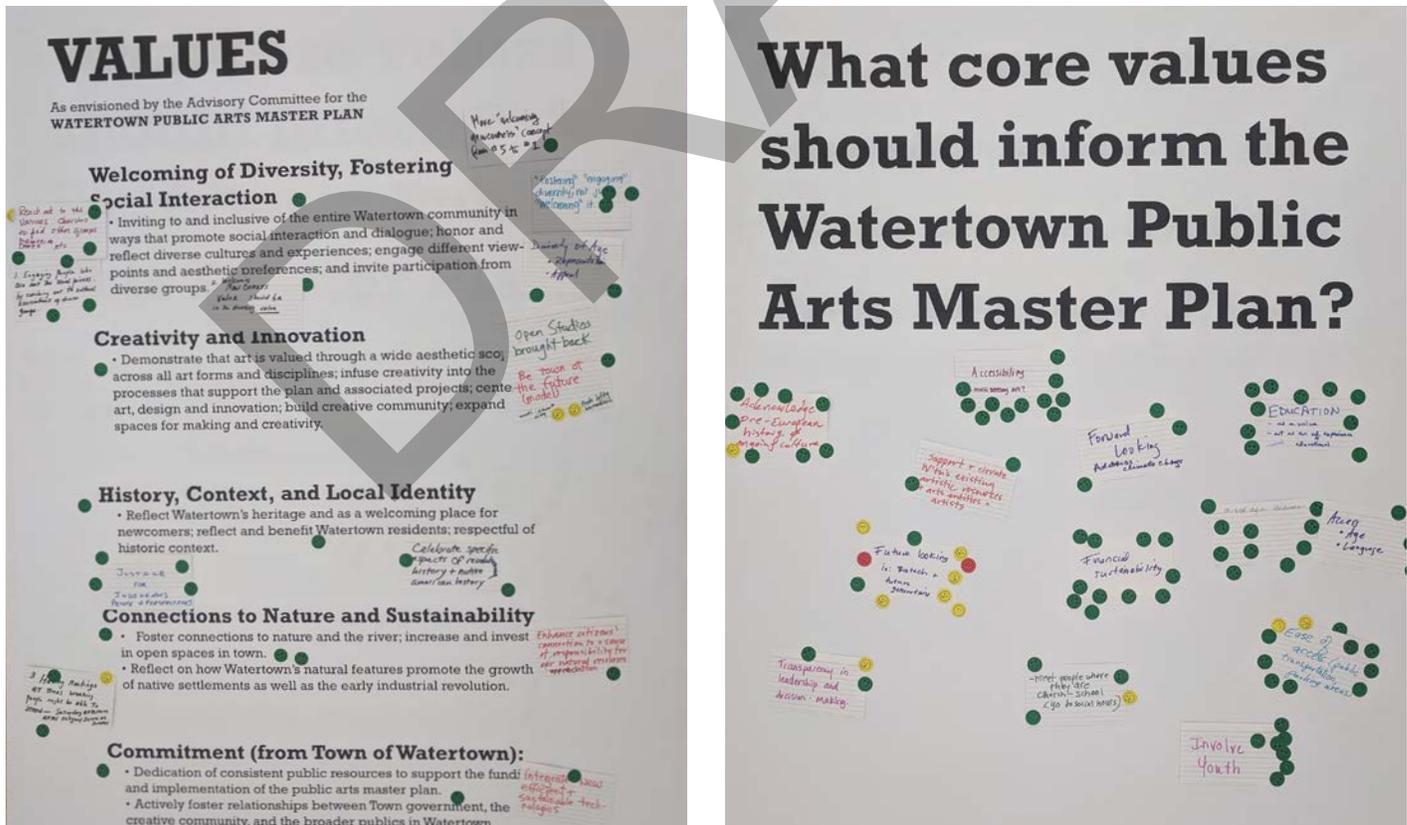


Figure 1. Results of workshop to refine values using notecards and emoji stickers during Public Forum #1



## Plan Development Process

The impetus for this plan emerged from the efforts of the citizen-led Watertown Public Arts and Culture Committee (WPACC), an ad hoc group of Watertown residents and other community members. Between 2013 and 2015, this group led the design and implementation of three public art projects that demonstrated the potential for public arts to foster new shared experiences and contribute to a more attractive and vibrant public realm. These projects also revealed the need for more transparent public processes and robust funding for public arts in Watertown.

MAPC worked with the Town Administrator and the Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee to create an Advisory Committee. These stakeholders devised the plan development process and engagement strategy and helped lead engagement efforts with the public. Over the summer of 2019, MAPC project team members Iolando Spinola and Emma Boast also conducted informational interviews with leaders and members of local cultural organizations, civic groups, small businesses, recreational facilities, and foundations to gain insight into Watertown’s civic infrastructure and community life.

In 2019, the Watertown Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) engaged Greater Boston’s regional planning agency, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to develop a public arts master plan to synthesize learnings from past projects, evaluate existing processes for public arts management and funding, and identify new opportunities to integrate the arts into the public realm.

This outreach informed the plan development process, which culminated in three main touchpoints with Watertown community members: a Public Arts Interest survey available in four languages as an online or paper survey that stimulated interest in the plan and gauged public interest in different types of public art; pop-up events where Advisory Committee members engaged with residents; and two public forums, where participants shaped the plan’s vision and values, identified potential locations, and weighed in on programmatic priorities and potential management and staffing structures.

MAPC and the Town convened a project advisory committee to inform the development of the Public Arts Master Plan. In recognition of WPACC’s efforts, the advisory committee included all members of that committee, along with other Watertown members who were selected to represent the diversity of Watertown as well as the variety of stakeholders who would steward the plan.



Figure 2. Workshop activity to refine values using notecards and emoji stickers during Public Forum #1







## Opportunities to Integrate Public Arts into Existing Town Priorities

### 1. Integration of Public Arts as Part of the Renovations of Educational Facilities

Building for the Future is a multi-year initiative to rehabilitate Watertown’s educational facilities. The program began in 2017, following completion of the School Facilities Master Plan (2016), and will result in the renovation and/or replacement of the physical plants of three elementary schools and one high school. The conceptual and schematic designs endorsed by the School Building Committee (and recommended by the Town Manager) envision new facilities for the Hosmer and Cunniff middle schools, comprehensive renovations and additions for the Lowell elementary school, and either renovation or replacement of Watertown High School. The Elementary Schools Building Project has already entered the design phase, but the High School Building Project is further from completion. As of April 2020, the project is in the feasibility study phase<sup>1</sup> and thus may present opportunities for the integration of public arts in the architectural program.

### 2. Integration of Public Arts as Part of Improvements to Open Spaces, Parks, and Recreational Facilities

The Watertown Riverfront Park, which covers a one-mile stretch of the Charles riverfront below the falls, has already demonstrated the power of thoughtfully and creatively designed public spaces to reconnect Watertown residents to the river—and to each other. This state-funded project, which includes a Braille Trail and Sensory Garden, provides a model for the development of more inclusive public spaces.

Extending improvements along the riverfront beyond the park and above the falls would also help expand access to the river and improve connectivity among the Town’s open spaces. The Watertown Open Space and Recreation Plan (2015) and Watertown Comprehensive Plan (2015) both recommend improvements to the Charles River path, including recreational access and improved signage along the path—prime opportunities to integrate functional public art.<sup>2</sup>

The fiscal year 2020-2024 capital improvement program also proposes allocations to support improvements to a number of parks and recreational spaces, including \$4.3M for Arsenal Park Renovations and a variety of small improvements to parks, playgrounds, and other recreational spaces, including walkway lighting in Sullivan Playground, design and renovation of the spray park in Fillippello Park, and renovations to the lobby of the Skating Arena building.<sup>3</sup>

1 “Building for the Future,” Watertown Public Schools, <https://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=190103&pageId=558248> (accessed November 14, 2019).

2 Watertown Comprehensive Plan (2015), p. 104. Watertown Open Space Plan 2015 - 2022 (2015), p. 106-107.

3 Watertown FY 2020 - FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program, p. 23-24.



### **3. Integration of Public Arts as Part of Improvements to Streets and Sidewalks**

Although most of the funding for improvements to streets and sidewalks in the fiscal year 2020-2024 capital improvement program is reserved for highway reconstruction and repaving, there is approximately just over \$1M allocated for street and sidewalk improvements. The budget also includes a proposed \$3M allocation for construction of the Watertown Community Path from Taylor Street to the Linear Park. This proposed multi-use path on a former railroad right-of-way would connect East Watertown, Watertown Square, and the Charles River. A small portion of the completed path, known as Watertown Linear Park, already features “A Bike Ride Through Watertown,” a mural created by Gregg Bernstein and local students. The path’s construction presents an ideal opportunity to develop additional murals and to integrate functional public art, such as benches, lighting, wayfinding and interpretive signage.<sup>4</sup>

The Watertown Complete Streets Prioritization Plan (2018) also presents several opportunities to bring creative thinking to improvements in Watertown’s public spaces. Feedback received through the Public Art Interests Survey and a Public Forum in October 2019 indicates that many Watertown residents would like to see improvements to the town’s streetscape that advance pedestrian and bicycle safety; improve the experience of traveling by foot, bicycle, and public transit; and foster a more inviting public realm. The Complete Streets plan recommends the construction of new bus shelters, shared-used paths, and enhanced intersection crossings. All of these improvements could include public art components such as artist-designed public seating and benches, art installations in bus shelters, crosswalk paving and painting, artful landscaping, creative drainage grates and utility covers, and other infrastructure that enhances public appreciation of both natural and human-made systems.

### **4. Opportunities to Celebrate, Highlight, and Expand Local Context and Community Identity**

Several existing funding priorities and plans could also support public arts that reflect, enhance, and expand representations of Watertown’s diverse heritage and communities. The fiscal year 2020-2024 capital improvement program proposes an annual allocation of \$15,000 to fund regular maintenance and upkeep of damaged monuments. This funding would also cover consultant fees and the town’s application for National Historic Register designation for the Arlington Street Cemetery. However, future funding for monuments could potentially be used to support creative reinterpretations of existing monuments and/or temporary installations that address underrepresented aspects of Watertown’s history, particularly its Indigenous heritage, and offer more inclusive representations of local history. Funds from the Community Preservation Act could potentially be allocated to support improvements to historic buildings and landscapes that enhance and expand public understanding of Watertown’s industrial heritage and diverse communities, past and present.

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4 Watertown FY 2020 – FY 2024 Capital Improvement Program, p. 24.

# Vision and Values for Public Arts in Watertown

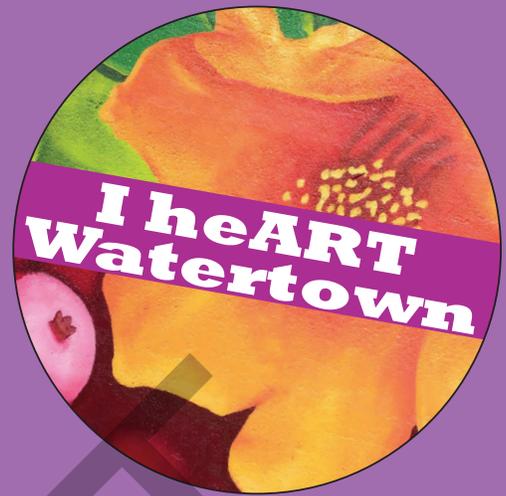
## Vision

The mission of the Watertown Public Arts and Culture Program is to integrate creative expressions and ideas into a variety of public settings for the benefit of the people of Watertown and visitors to the community.

This plan envisions a program that leverages artists' unique abilities to act as connectors across generations, cultures, and geographies. It aims to support artists in pursuit of inclusive and collaborative projects that nurture the creative potential—and honor and engage the cultural experiences—of Watertown diverse residents, and in which all residents are empowered to take an active role in shaping Watertown's public cultural life.

## Guiding Values

These values should inform the design and implementation of the Watertown Public Arts and Culture Program. They have been used to guide the identification of recommendations about the program's design management, administration, and funding. These values were initially developed in conversation with the Watertown Public Arts Master Plan Advisory Committee, expanded through conversation with attendees at a public forum held on September 30, 2019, and refined through further discussion with the Advisory Committee.



## **What is a value, and why are values important to a *Public Arts and Culture Program*?**

A value is a lasting belief or ideal about what is important in life. Values exist at the individual level or collective level and can orient and guide action. There are different ways values can inform actions, and the ability to operationalize values requires building reflective practices into the Public Arts and Culture Program's procedures, programs, and policies.

Values in action can inform decisions about the composition of the Public Arts Commission or Committee, the selection of artists according to values-informed guidelines, the prioritization of sites or projects, the allocation of funds to support a variety of programmatic priorities, and more.

### **Foster Diversity and Interaction**



Support the creation of experiences and installations that are inviting to and inclusive of the entire Watertown community in ways that promote social interaction, new relationships, and dialogue; honor and reflect diverse cultures and experiences; engage different view-points and aesthetic preferences; and invite participation from people diverse in age, languages spoken, cultural backgrounds, and physical abilities.

### **Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown's Past, Present, and Future**



Reflect Watertown's heritage and the cultural diversity of newer and older residents alike; recognize and engage with historical contexts that impact the experience of public spaces in Watertown by recognizing immigrant, Black and Native American histories, experiences, and perspectives.

### **Bolster Creativity in Community Life**



Demonstrate that art is valued through a wide aesthetic scope across all art forms and disciplines including the visual, music, digital, mixed media, and performing arts; connect artists into capital improvement processes (such as park and bike path design) and other town projects; bolster the public arts through partnerships with public institutions like the schools and library; build creative community; and expand spaces for making and creativity.

### **Make Connections to Nature and Sustainability**



Foster connections to natural resources including the Charles River; integrate arts and cultural experiences into natural features and landscapes and seek opportunities to engage with water, ecology, plant life and wildlife.

### **Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments and Partnerships**



Commit stable and consistent resources for the public arts on an ongoing basis to support plan implementation from Town sources and private sources leveraged from the Watertown community.

# Public Arts in Watertown: Existing Conditions

## **Brief History of Public Arts in Watertown**

Several resident-led projects formed the impetus for this plan and its vision for a public arts and culture program that integrates arts into the public realm and advances shared civic values of diversity, inclusion, and social cohesion. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, two treasured memorials developed by Waltham-based artist Joshua Winer demonstrated opportunities for arts-based interdisciplinary learning in Watertown's public schools. Around the same time, a public-private partnership also emerged, which led to the creation of the Mosesian Center for the Arts. The Mosesian Center continues to exist today as publicly-funded infrastructure for the arts – operating as a nonprofit center that houses a number of non-profit organizations offering programming and productions that engage a regional audience located in Watertown and beyond.

The ad-hoc Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee (WPACC) formed in 2013 to take advantage of resources and an opportunity to site art along a portion of the pedestrian and bike path being created through Watertown. Over the course of three years, this volunteer, resident-led committee produced three mural projects.

The WPACC also created the Watertown Public Arts and Culture Kit (WPACK), a document intended to educate Watertown residents about the goals of the Committee and inspire them to initiate and support new public arts and culture projects. Supported by the Watertown Cultural Council and the Watertown Planning office, the WPACK functions as a repository of public art information and ideas from around the world for use by residents, artists, developers, and town officials to amplify public art here. It envisions Watertown as a community rich

in cultures and art, appreciation and expression and honors placemaking, artists and community engagement as integral to public art.

In addition to its support for WPACC, the Watertown Cultural Council has provided support and grants for the Committee's mural efforts and has acted as the Committee's fiscal agent to enable WPACC to qualify for other funding.

Since the formation of the WPACC, Watertown has witnessed an increased commitment to public arts and culture from Town leadership and staff. In 2015, the Watertown Town Council adopted design standards and guidelines for development along Watertown's commercial corridors that included the following recommendation for public realm interface strategies to be encouraged:

***“Public Art Opportunities.** Where possible, public art and other cultural considerations should be incorporated into a development. This can range from dedicated community gathering and gallery space, to showcasing local artists' work in lobbies and other publicly accessible spaces, to exterior pieces of sculpture, murals, and a number of other mediums. This serves to bolster local artists, enrich the public contribution the building makes, better engage the surrounding community, and enhance the passing pedestrian's experience.”<sup>5</sup>*

Ruth K. Henry's 2018 participatory mural at the Boys and Girls Club, “The Time is Always Right,” demonstrated how creative engagement with civic and cultural stakeholders could shape meaningful opportunities for public participation while fostering community dialogue around social and racial justice. The project was developed with advisory support from the Committee, and its prominent location within Watertown's civic core communicates the value of public arts to Watertown visitors and residents alike.

To continue the momentum of the Committee's work, the Town decided to embark on a public arts planning process has led to the creation of the plan, which aims to expand the conversation about arts and culture to a broader community audience and establish a plan and framework for leveraging public funds to support future public arts initiatives.

## Documentation of Current Public Arts Collection

Broadly speaking, public arts in Watertown fall into three categories, each with different implications for partnerships, funding, and coordination with a town-led public arts and culture program:

- **Public Arts in the Public Realm** includes arts in Watertown's public streets, sidewalks, paths, and open space, encompasses the town's arts and cultural events, murals, artistic wayfinding, and monuments and memorials. This category is the primary focus of this plan.
- **Public Arts in Public Buildings** encompasses architecture and decorative arts in public buildings, and art collections and installations managed and led by public entities including the Watertown Public Library and the Watertown Public Schools.
- **Public Arts in Privately-owned Spaces and Buildings** includes interior murals in private buildings accessible to the public, murals commissioned by developers or property owners for privately-owned buildings, and events and festivals managed and run by private arts and culture organizations or individuals.

Summary documentation of Watertown's collections in these categories is included in Appendix 6.

Public Arts in the Public Realm is the primary focus of the Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee, and their work has generated a number of new installations that build on the existing public arts and culture assets in town including the ongoing Summer Concert Series that brings free outdoor music performances to Saltonstall Park during the summer months.

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5 Gamble Associates. “Watertown Massachusetts Design Guidelines.” Adopted by Watertown Town Council June 30, 2019.

to support future public art initiatives.

## **Town Leadership on Public Arts**

### **Establishment of Ad-Hoc Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee**

Since the Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee formed in 2013, the Town has supported the Committee's efforts to integrate arts into the public realm by assigning a Planning staff representative to WPACC, providing operational support through the Planning office, providing infrastructural assistance through the Public Works department, and advocating for and facilitating youth involvement in three mural projects through the Recreation department. The Watertown Cultural Council acted as fiscal agent for WPACC and provided grant support to the mural projects. Town Councilors expressed support for institutionalizing a Public Art effort in Watertown. To continue the momentum of the Committee's work, the Town embarked on a public arts planning process that would expand the conversation about arts and culture to a broader community audience and establish a plan and framework for leveraging public funds

## **Public Arts Selection Processes**

### **Current Processes for Selection, Management, and Funding of Public Arts in Watertown**

To date, there has not been a consistent process guiding the selection, management, and funding of public art in Watertown. The establishment of transparent processes for decision-making and resident involvement is a core recommendation of this plan and will help ensure the longevity of the Town's public arts program.

Brief studies of five recent public art projects in Watertown are described to inform recommendations for artist and project selection procedures. These studies begin on page 28 below.

# Forming and Staffing Municipal Committees

Watertown's administrative structure and policies support two types of municipal committees. Requirements for creating and staffing these committees vary accordingly and are detailed below.

## 1. Appointed Boards, Commissions, and Committees

While some boards, commissions, and committees are enabled and regulated by the state, many are established by the Town. All are municipal government entities. Members are appointed by the Town Manager, and most are then confirmed by the Town Council. These entities tend to have statutory authority and a prescribed process for appointment. There is no set minimum or maximum number of members for these entities.

*Example: Community Preservation Committee*

- Nine voting members (all volunteer)
  - Four appointed citizens-at-large.
  - Five statutory members representing specific town departments, boards, and commissions.
- Members serve alternating three-year terms. Initial terms vary from one to three years, depending on an appointee's role.

## 2. Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc Committees act as advisory bodies to Town departments or leaders, or appointed committees. These committees may include residents and Town staff. They do not have a prescribed appointment process or term limits. There is no minimum or maximum number of members that Ad Hoc Committees must have, though 6-8 members is typical.

The Town Manager typically appoints citizen members, and the Town Council confirms them. Some Ad Hoc Committees may have only one Town staff while others have multiple Town staff.

*Example: Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee*

- Six members (all volunteer)
  - Five members are Citizens-At-Large
  - 1 member is a Town of Watertown employee (Head Clerk, Community Development and Planning)

## Appointment Process for Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Each January, The Town Clerk prepares a list of all town boards, commissions, and committees ("Town Boards") with member terms due to expire during that calendar year. This list is sent to the Town Council and Town Manager, posted on the Town bulletin board and Town website for at least 14 days and published at least twice in the local newspaper. Postings must include a description of the positions.

The Town Manager (or their designee) interviews candidates and selects one for each position. Only the selected candidate is forwarded to the Council for confirmation.

For appointments requiring confirmation by the Town Council, the Town Council or a committee thereof must interview the selected candidate at a public meeting.

Town Council votes to confirm the appointment of the selected candidate. The posted agenda for this meeting must contain notice of the vote.

# Community Engagement

## Plan Development Process

The impetus for this plan emerged from the efforts of the citizen-led Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee (WPACC), an ad hoc group of Watertown residents and other community members. From 2013 to 2015, this group led the design and implementation of three public art projects in Watertown: murals along the Watertown Linear Path and Baptist walk, and a project that combined oral histories, murals, and wayfinding in Coolidge Square. These projects demonstrated an appetite for public art in Watertown and revealed the need for more reliable funding and transparent public processes.

In 2019, the Watertown Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) engaged greater Boston's regional planning agency, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to develop a public art plan to synthesize learnings from past projects, evaluate existing processes for public arts management and funding, and identify new opportunities to integrate the arts into the public realm.

MAPC and the Town convened a project Advisory Committee to inform the development of the Public Arts Master Plan. In recognition of WPACC's efforts, the Advisory Committee included all members of that committee, along with other members who were selected to represent the diversity of Watertown and the variety of stakeholders who would steward the plan.



## Community Engagement Goals

While the values were being developed by the Advisory Committee and the public for the entire Public Arts Master Plan, MAPC and the Advisory Committee identified the following goals to guide the public engagement approach:

- Educate the public on the WPACC Public Arts & Culture Kit.
- Solicit input into priority locations and preferences for public art installations and experiences in Watertown.
- Invite public engagement into refining shared values for diverse Watertown culture and the commissioning of public art.
- Gather data into equitable decision-making structures for the commissioning of public art.
- Build community amongst local Watertown artists.
- Connect Town Councilors to Advisory Committee members.
- Engage local businesses and other potential funding institutions in the process.

## Community Engagement Timeline

After entering into a contract with the Town of Watertown, MAPC worked with the Town Administrator and the Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee to create an Advisory Committee to advise on the process and help lead engagement efforts with the public. Throughout the process, MAPC staff created the scaffolding for the elements of the plan, reviewed draft content with the Advisory Committee, and then brought ideas to the public for feedback.

This process culminated in three main touchpoints with Watertown community members. Throughout the summer months, the engagement team and Advisory Committee members popped up at local events and businesses, where they shared two public arts surveys to stimulate interest in the plan, gauge public perceptions of different types of public art, and garner ideas for themes and locations for public art. MAPC staff also interviewed individuals and organizations outside the Advisory Committee to gain insight into Watertown's civic infrastructure and community life. This was followed by the first of two public forums, where participants helped refine the plan's vision and values and developed ideas for potential locations and programmatic priorities. The second forum invited community members into a conversation about implementation strategies for the public arts program, including management structures and staffing. Once the plan is complete, the Town will work with the Advisory Committee and the public to implement it.



Figure 4. Public Forum #2

## Community Engagement Elements

Throughout the Public Arts Master Planning process, MAPC worked with the Town to use the following engagement tools. These tools ensured that the public had a meaningful chance to provide input into the Master Planning process while creating space for leadership to emerge and help guide the future implementation of the Plan. Over the course of seven months, more than 600 people engaged in the planning process through participation in informational interviews, attendance at public events, and completion of the Public Arts Interest survey.

The diagram opposite visualizes how MAPC, the Advisory Committee, the Town, and the public contributed to the plan development and community engagement processes.

### ENGAGEMENT TOOL

### PURPOSE

#### Advisory Committee Meetings

Build momentum for project, have members serve as champions for the project. May-August 1) gather input on master planning process, and 2) to enlist their help in publicizing it.

#### One-on-one Interviews

Develop partnership ideas with harder to reach key stakeholders to be involved in the Public Forums and engage their communities in providing input into the online survey.

#### Popups at events

Build new knowledge and contacts for people who may participate in the preference survey as well as provide feedback into the decision-making structure for the future commissioning of public art.

#### Surveys

Engage the public in a conversation about the WPACK kit, enabling them to provide input into the locations and kinds of public arts that they would like to see proliferate in Watertown.

#### Flyers and other promotional material

Reach out to new audiences and encourage members to participate in process through attendance at charrette and/or filling out an online survey.

#### Public Forums

Provide an opportunity for residents to work together in identifying preferences and locations for public art as well as the decision-making structure for the commissioning of future installations.

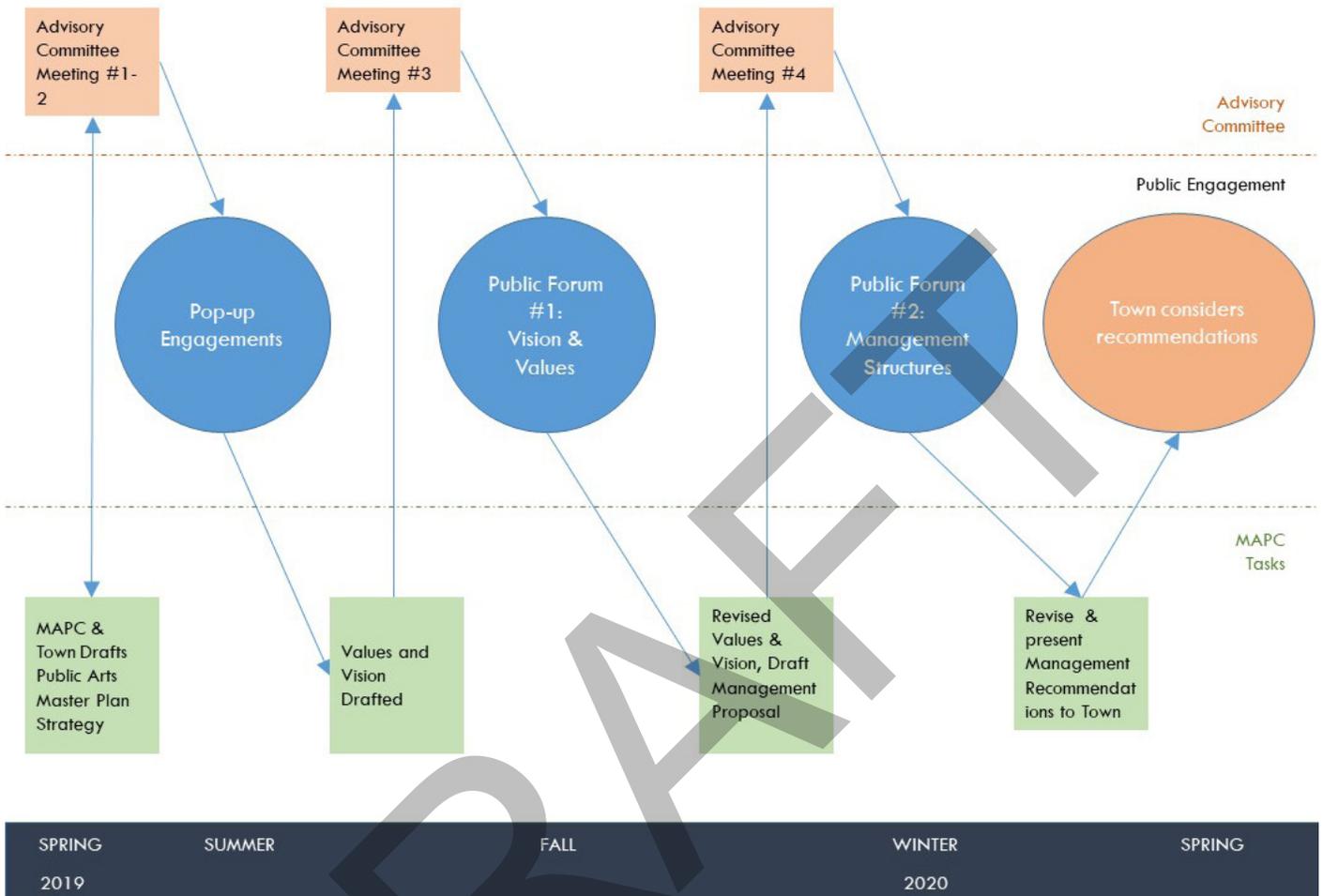


Figure 5. Public Forum #1

# Community Engagement Timeline

Figure 6: Public Arts Master Plan Engagement Timeline

## Watertown Public Art Master Plan Engagement Process



### Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee was created by the Town and MAPC to inform the development of the Public Arts Master Plan. Members of the Advisory Committee were selected as representatives of the diversity of Watertown as well as the variety of stakeholders who will need to be involved in future implementation efforts. A list of Advisory Committee members is included on Page 2.

Participation in the public forums was open to all. Watertown residents, workers, and affiliates were encouraged to attend through the engagement tools described above. Members of the Advisory Committee attended and helped facilitate small group conversations with members of the public.

For detailed information about Advisory Committee meetings and outreach conducted through interviews and public events, see Appendix 2.

# Public Arts Program Recommendations

## Introduction

Prior public arts projects in Watertown, including those managed by the Watertown Public Arts and Culture Committee, have primarily supported the integration of the visual arts into the public realm. Using lessons from these projects as a starting point, this chapter provides recommendations for administrative, financial, and programmatic strategies that can support a wide array of public arts projects and programs. These recommendations synthesize key lessons from previous public art projects in Watertown, research into best and emerging practices in public art management, interviews with public art administrators around the country and Advisory Committee members, and feedback from Watertown community members engaged throughout the planning process through outreach and informational interviews, and at pop-up events and public forums.

## Guiding Values and Relevance to Program + Policy Recommendations

The following guiding values for the Watertown Public Arts Plan informed the five core recommendations of this Plan on the following page.



Foster Diversity and Interaction



Bolster Creativity in Community Life



Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown's Past, Present, and Future



Make Connections to Nature and Sustainability



Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments and Partnerships

# Five Core Recommendations

## **1 Integrate Arts into Planning and Community Development**

Establish a staffed position in the Department of Planning and Community Development to support the development of public arts projects and initiatives that advance the Town's community development goals, as articulated in the 2015 Watertown Comprehensive Plan, particularly those pertaining to development and preservation of affordable housing, enhanced connectivity and open space, support for neighborhood retail and small businesses, and improvements to the public realm that enhance mobility and livability for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

## **2 Establish Policies and Metrics that Align with Program Values**

Establish a Public Art Policy with standards and guidelines for the acquisition and management of the Town's Public Art Collection, guidelines for site and artist selection, processes for ensuring equitable and inclusive public participation, and requirements for ongoing evaluation and tracking of participant demographics for all facets of the public arts program.

## **3 Build Lasting Partnerships Among Municipal and Civic Stakeholders**

Foster relationships and partnerships among Town departments (particularly the Department of Public Works and Parks and Recreation) as well as public and private entities (particularly the public schools, public library, and community-based and cultural organizations) to ensure that public arts projects and programs support and strengthen community life and are integrated into everyday experience.

## **4 Support and Strengthen Community Ties**

Mobilize and strengthen existing networks and organizations at the heart of Watertown's cultural and community life. Focus on investments in arts education and public arts initiatives in Watertown public schools, and develop partnerships with community-based arts and cultural organizations to seed projects that highlight Watertown's unique neighborhoods, historic and cultural heritage (including its Indigenous cultural heritage and industrial heritage), and cultural diversity.

## **5 Ensure a Variety of Funding Sources for Arts and Culture**

Cultivate funding streams that can support an array of public arts initiatives, including semi-permanent, temporary, and ephemeral projects and programs. This should include a percent-for-art mechanism that can support the integration of durable (semi-permanent and temporary) artworks in public buildings and facilities, as well as sponsorships and grants for innovative partnerships, festivals, and other opportunities that activate the arts in the public realm.

## Recommendations in Action

### Integrate Arts into Planning and Community Development



Develop public arts projects and initiatives that advance the Town's community development goals. A number of existing or proposed initiatives offer natural opportunities for integrating public arts and culture. Key opportunities include:

#### Watertown Community Path Improvements

The proposed \$3M allocation to extend the Community Path presents an opportunity to pilot the integration of public arts with capital improvements through the addition of murals and functional public art, such as benches, lighting, wayfinding and interpretive signage in the proposed design.

#### Charles River Walkway Improvements

Working with the Massachusetts Department of Conversation and Recreation, Public Arts Program Staff can identify opportunities to improve signage and increase access through functional public art.

### Establish Policies and Metrics that Align with Program Values



Establish an appointed Public Arts and Culture Committee to draft and enact a Public Art Policy that outlines a vision, guiding values, procedures, and evaluation criteria for a Watertown Public Arts Program. Detailed recommendations related to this area of work are included in subsequent sections of this Public Arts Master Plan. Establish approach to addressing controversial sites and monuments such as the Columbus Delta Monument.

### Build Lasting Partnerships Among Municipal and Civic Stakeholders



Existing public arts created in Watertown established partnerships among artists, volunteers, anchor institutions such as Tufts Health and Home Depot, and municipal departments including the Department of Planning and Community Development, Watertown Public Schools, the Department of Public Works, and the Parks and Recreation Department. Nurturing these relationships and partnerships will ensure that public arts projects and programs support and strengthen community life and are integrated into everyday experience. Opportunities to strengthen these partnerships through projects include:

#### Watertown Public Schools Facilities Improvements

The High School Building Project, which is in the first phase of its feasibility study may present opportunities for the integration of public arts in the architectural program and to strengthen Watertown Public Schools as a public arts partner.

#### Parks Improvements



Parks improvements such as renovations to Arsenal Park, walkway lighting in Sullivan playground and other design and renovation projects are upcoming opportunities to partner with the Department of Parks and Recreation to integrate public arts into Watertown's open spaces and recreation facilities.

### Complete Streets Implementation

Coordinate with Department of Public Works and other municipal entities to integrate public arts into new bus shelters, improvements to shared-used paths, and enhanced intersection crossings.

## Support and Strengthen Community Ties



By strengthening community ties, the Watertown Public Arts Program can expand participation in public arts across Watertown’s diverse cultural communities and ensure that Watertown’s public arts represents its diversity of cultural expressions and identities. Leading efforts to assess the existing landscape of monuments and memorials in Watertown is one way the Public Arts and Culture Committee could expand community voice and participation in community arts. Opportunities include:

### Informational Interviews

Building on the connections established through informational interviews during the process of developing the Watertown Public Arts Master Plan would also support this strategy. Conversations with owners of local businesses including barbershops and restaurants as well as individuals affiliated with local cultural organizations like the Iranian Association of Boston and the Watertown Community Foundation engaged a more diverse audience than planning workshops alone. A list of all interviews is included in Appendix 2.

### Charles River Sacred Paddle

The Charles River in Watertown is an important site for the *Sacred Paddle*, an annual event that commemorates the forced removal of Native Americans from Watertown to Deer Island at the start of King Philip’s war in 1675.<sup>11</sup> Connecting with the organizers of and participants in this event could lead to shared exploration of how to honor Watertown’s Indigenous heritage in partnership with Native American individuals, organizations and tribes.

## Ensure a Variety of Funding Sources for Arts and Culture



Implementation of a public arts program that supports an array of public arts initiatives, requires funding to support municipal staff time as well as funding to support program activities including permanent, semi-permanent, temporary, and ephemeral projects and programs. In addition to grants from the Watertown Cultural Council, which provide small amounts of funding, three key funding strategies include:

### Percent for Art

A percent-for-art mechanism would enable the integration of durable artworks in public facilities and grounds.

### Municipal Budget Allocation

Dedicating funding to support the Public Arts Program through an annual allocation out of the municipal budget or through appropriating a percent of local option tax revenue would support a wide range of program needs that might not be eligible for percent-for art funding.

Staff time for program administration, partnership development and grant writing among other activities could be covered as well as funding for festivals, events, and other activities that do not generate durable works of public art.

### Private Funding Sources

Cultivating sponsorships and grants to support the Public Arts Program can allow for innovative partnerships, festivals, and other opportunities that activate the arts in the public realm. Previously completed mural projects have relied on a variety of private funding sources including grants from local banks and foundations, and financial and in-kind contributions from individuals and businesses.

Julie Balise. “Photos: Native Americans make sacred paddle to Deer Island.” MetroWest Daily News. October 10, 2010. Accessed October 19, 2020 online at <https://www.metrowestdailynews.com/article/20101031/News/310319986>

# Program Administration

## Public Arts Authority Roles + Responsibilities

At the second public forum, in January 2020, MAPC staff presented two options for administering the public arts program. The first option would have established an Arts and Culture Commission with broad responsibilities for promoting the arts and cultural life in Watertown with a subsidiary Public Arts Committee responsible for developing semi-permanent and temporary projects that integrate the arts into the public realm. The second option eliminated the Arts and Culture Commission in favor of a single authority, the Public Arts and Culture Committee, with somewhat broader responsibilities than a typical public art committee.

Forum attendees expressed a strong preference for the second option, with the possibility of establishing an Arts and Culture Commission in the future, depending on the evolution of the public arts program and availability of resources. Based on this overwhelming public feedback, we recommend the creation of an appointed Public Arts and Culture Committee (PACC) that acts as a permanent, standing advisory body to the Town of Watertown, with authority over two core program areas:

1. **Art in Public Places:** Permanent, semi-permanent, temporary, and ephemeral artworks and activations that create a more vibrant, welcoming, inclusive, and connected public realm. This may include semi-permanent projects funded through a percent-for-art ordinance (where a property or site is dedicated to public art as an element in new construction), as well as temporary artworks and installations funded through other means.
2. **Cultural and Community Life:** Programming that enhances the public realm, engages Watertown's community life and cultural diversity, and fosters social cohesion.

## Public Arts & Culture Committee Structure

- Staffed by a full-time, paid staff member from the Department of Planning and Community Development.
- Seven to nine members: six members-at-large and one standing member who represents the Watertown Cultural Council. Two seats may be added for members under the age of 21.
- Members serve three-year terms. A member may serve two consecutive terms, after which point they must take one year off before re-applying.
- Committee may convene working groups to attend to business such as evaluation, fundraising, and community partnerships and outreach.

## Roles and Responsibilities

- Draft a public arts and culture policy to be adopted by the Town Council and administered by the Public Arts and Culture Committee.
- Commission permanent, semi-permanent and temporary public artwork and cultural programming on Town property (including Town-owned buildings and outdoor spaces).
- Approve annual strategic plan and budget for the Public Arts and Culture Program.
- Oversee revisions to public art policies and procedures, including periodic updates to the Town's Public Arts Master Plan.
- Review recommendations from ad-hoc Art Selection Panels to be recommended to the Town Council for approval.
- Approve the de-accession or relocation of artwork from the Town's Public Art Collection, subject to approval of Town Council and Town Manager.
- Advocate for public arts and culture in Watertown.
- Convene local artists and cultural organizations to facilitate knowledge sharing, professional development, and partnerships.

## Member-at-Large Qualifications

- Members should be Town residents with experience in the visual arts, performing arts, arts education, curation, architecture, design, or landscape architecture. Members may include staff and board members of arts and cultural organizations.
- At least two members should be working artists (those who derive at least 50% of their income from the production, sale, or distribution of art), arts administrators or cultural historians. At least one member will have direct experience with or knowledge of public art installation and maintenance.
- Membership should reflect a diversity of ages, incomes, ethnicities, racial identities, cultures, and abilities, and should reflect the current demographics of Watertown.

## Public Arts & Culture Program Staff

The town's Public Arts and Culture Committee, or PACC, should be staffed by a paid staff member of the Department of Planning and Community Development. Staff will be responsible for managing and implementing all stages of public art projects and cultural initiatives throughout Watertown.

## Roles and Responsibilities

- Develop and oversee the implementation of annual strategic plan and budget for the Public Arts and Culture Program, with input from the PACC.
- Develop and implement the Town's Public Arts and Culture Policy with input from the PACC for presentation to Town Council.
- Oversee periodic updates to the Town's Public Arts Master Plan, with input from the PACC.
- Staff the PACC, ad-hoc working groups and art selection panels.
- Identify program opportunities and project sites, staff collaborative public processes, and solicit input from relevant town staff, boards, and commissions.
- Oversee review of works considered for de-accession.

- Manage the implementation of Public Arts & Culture Program objectives, including installation and maintenance of permanent and temporary public artwork on Town property (including Town-owned buildings and outdoor spaces), commissioning of cultural programming, and fulfillment of contracts with artists.
- Maintain regular communication with Town boards and departments whose work intersects with the strategic priorities of the Public Arts Master Plan, including the Department of Public Works, Conservation Commission, Recreation Department, Historical Commission, Historic District Commission, the Watertown Free Public Library, and the School Committee.
- Serve as a liaison for local arts and cultural organizations and Town boards, departments, and leadership.
- Promote awareness of arts and culture activities in Watertown by interacting with local news, TV, radio, and social media, and by managing public website of Town-wide cultural programming, activities, and events.

## Staff Qualifications

- Background in arts administration, cultural planning and policy, or community-based arts or a related field plus three years or more of experience in public art project management (or an equivalent combination of education, experience, and transferable skills).
- Exceptional project management and organizational skills.
- Excellent verbal and written communications skills, including a demonstrated ability to navigate competing interests and build consensus.
- Knowledge of emerging practices in the fields of contemporary and public art, for example creative placemaking, socially engaged art, performance art, media and digital arts.

# Project and Site Selection

## Summary

In general, the site selection process should be initiated by Public Arts and Culture Program staff, in conversation with other relevant Town departments, the Town Council, and community stakeholders. The Public Arts and Culture Program staff should then prepare a Project Scope and submit this to the PACC for discussion and approval.

This Scope should include the site or sites to be explored. For projects integrated into capital improvements or private developments, the site might be defined at the outset. For other types of projects, such as temporary exhibitions, installations, activations, partnerships, or programming, the site might be generally defined as a neighborhood or other geographic area, a community, or another entity, such as a community-based organization or cultural organization. In these cases, the artist should identify the site through the conceptual development and community engagement processes.

## Project Scope Elements

- Overview of the project's goals and the proposed project's relationship to the Public Arts and Culture Program's vision, values, and core programming areas;
- Description of the specific type of project being proposed (e.g. percent-for-art in capital improvement project, community art exhibition, artist residency in another Town department or community-based organization);
- Description of the project's location, including topography, environmental considerations, infrastructure, proximity to rights-of-way, documentation of land ownership and easements, and other information regarding the proposed siting;
- Intended duration (e.g. permanent, semi-permanent, or temporary);
- Confirmed and potential partners and stakeholders;
- Potential composition of the ad-hoc Art Selection Panel;
- Budget and proposed funding sources;
- Timeline, including an overview of the project timeline in relation to the capital improvement project timeline, if applicable;
- Artist selection method and selection criteria.

## Partnerships for Project Scopes

When developing the Project Scope, Public Arts and Culture Program staff should consider the range of potential partners who may be involved in the project's conceptualization, development, and implementation, depending on the project's alignment with the two core program areas:

1. Art in Public Places: Town Department, public agency, community organization, or developer with control over the site where the public art project will be located or take place, or with active community involvement in the site where the public art project will be located or take place.
2. Cultural and Community Life: Town department, public agency, or community organization that develops or partners on programs that help support the Watertown Public Arts Plan's vision and values.

## Site Selection Criteria

Site selection criteria will vary according to the specific type of project being proposed, but some general considerations should apply.

- Proposed site presents an opportunity to integrate public arts and culture with existing or proposed planning and community development priorities, initiatives, and/or projects.
- Proposed site is part of the Town's pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit circulation paths, or has potential to promote stronger connections among areas of high circulation.
- Proposed site is a place of gathering, activity, and/or social and cultural life.
- Proposed site promotes connections to nature or environmental sustainability.
- Proposed site functions as a landmark or gateway to the town, a commercial district, or a neighborhood.
- Proposed site has been identified by community members as socially, culturally, or historically significant or meaningful.

## Artist Selection Process

For each project, Public Arts and Culture Program staff should convene an ad-hoc Art Selection Panel tasked with reviewing artist qualifications and proposals and recommending a project finalist to the PACC for review. Staff should outline the desired composition of the Art Selection Panel in their initial Project Scope. Art Selection Panels should be independent of the political influence of the PACC and elected officials. All Art Selection Panels should be staffed by Public Arts and Culture Program staff.

### Selection Panel Roles and Responsibilities

- Serve in an advisory role to the PACC.
- Review artist qualifications and project proposals and recommend a project finalist to the PACC for review.

### Selection Panel Membership

Five to seven members including:\*

- One member of any applicable board, commission, or department;
- Local artists or arts professionals and culture workers, especially those with expertise and experience that is relevant to the project theme or site;
- Community members with relevant experience with and/or expertise related to the project theme or site. Such members may include but are not limited to residents of nearby neighborhoods, representatives of nearby business districts, and those with relationships with the community that the project proposes to engage.

\* The chair of the PACC or a designated PACC member will serve as a standing, non-voting panel member.

# Artist and Artistic Concept Selection

The proposed selection processes outlined below have been developed in accordance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts's Public Procurement Act, Chapter 30B. Within Chapter 30B, Section 2 defines a Grant Agreement as "an agreement between a governmental body and an individual or nonprofit entity the purpose of which is to carry out a public purpose or stimulation instead of procuring supplies or services for the benefit or use of the governmental body." A Grant Agreement pursuant to MGL c. 30B §2 is a public contract. Public art carries out a "public purpose of support or stimulation" within the purview of MGL. C. 30B §2. Grant agreements allow municipalities to support concept development through stipends and to promote greater public engagement in public art selection processes.

## Call for Artists / Artist Selection Process

In this process, artists are chosen based on their past and current art and achievements. In lieu of requesting a detailed proposal, the Call may ask artists to provide a brief comment on their approach to the project. Each Call and accompanying selection criteria should be tailored to the project in question. Selection criteria should ensure that emerging artists are not at a disadvantage relative to their more established peers.

1. Working with the PACC, the Public Arts and Culture Program staff develops and releases a Call for Artists including selection criteria, and artists submit qualifications. These should include a cover letter, examples of previous work, a resume or CV, and references.
2. Artist Selection Panel screens submissions according to selection criteria as outlined in the Call.
3. Artist Selection Panel makes the final selection based on past work and conformance with selection criteria and submits the recommendation to the PACC for approval.
4. PACC submits recommendation to the Town Manager and Town Council for final approval.
5. The contracted artist(s) develop(s) a full proposal, including a maintenance plan and budget.
6. Proposals may be presented for public review and comment to inform final review and approval by the PACC, Town Council and Town Manager.

## Calls for Art

When a detailed proposal for a site is needed (e.g. a permanent sculptural installation), a grant agreement for professional services may be provided to one or more artists identified through the procedures outlined above. Provisions of 30B allow the granting entity to use sound business practices for professional services below \$10,000. This limits the total funds expended **for proposal development** services for a given project across all artists to less than \$10,000.

1. Public Arts and Culture Program staff, capital project manager, if applicable, PACC and other relevant stakeholders identify selection criteria relevant to the project.
2. Program staff uses the criteria to select candidates from a database of pre-qualified artists. In the absence of such a database, or if the database does not meet the needs of the project, the PACC issues a Call for Artists to identify qualified artists.
3. Each artist enters a grant agreement with the Town and develops and submits a full proposal including a maintenance plan and budget.
4. The PACC Chair and program staff work with the Town Engineer to assess proposal feasibility and coordinate opportunities for public input on proposal selection.
5. The Art Selection panel makes a final selection based on the proposal, public input and past work and submits their recommended finalist to the PACC for review and approval.
6. PACC submits its recommendation to the Town Manager and Town Council for final approval.

## Selection Criteria Guidelines and Considerations

- Commissioning entities and partners should establish artist selection criteria at the outset of each project. At minimum, this should include geographic eligibility (for example, if there is a preference for local or regional artists), as well as any skills or expertise the artist must possess.
- Criteria should reflect the project’s goals and intended stakeholders, as outlined in the Project Scope.
- For projects where an artwork will be integrated with construction, conduct artist selection as early as possible in the process to ensure coordination among the artist, design and engineering teams, relevant Town departments, and other project partners.
- Stand-alone permanent outdoor public art installations must be installed by either the Town (through its Department of Public Works) or a contractor procured by the Town pursuant to MGL c. 30, 39M. Project scope and selection criteria should reflect known restrictions or requirements for feasible installation on the project site.

## Public Arts and Culture Program Administration Summary

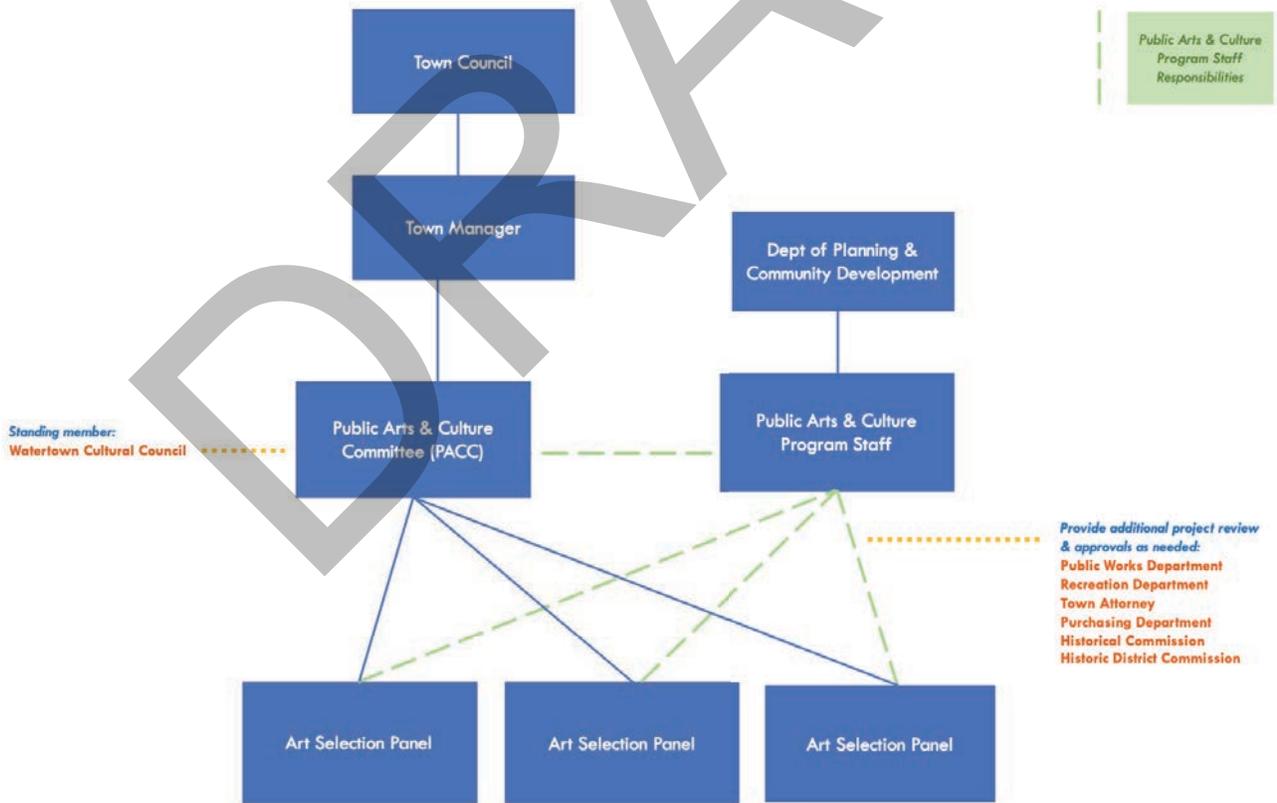


Figure 7. Public Arts and Culture Program Administrative Chart

## Public Arts Selection in Watertown: Case Studies

These projects emerged in response to local circumstances, with organizers seeking the support and approval of Town departments as needed. These projects collectively demonstrate the value of having a dedicated staff person who can respond to local needs and concerns and nurture existing and emergent networks and relationships to facilitate community-driven processes and projects. Detailed case studies are available in an appendix.



**Joshua Winer.**

**"Peter B. Clough Memorial Mobile."**

**1999-2000. Mixed media.**

**Watertown Middle School, Watertown, MA.**

*Figure 8:  
"Peter B. Clough Memorial Mobile."  
Watertown Middle School.  
Photo courtesy of Joshua Winer.*

**Summary:** One of two memorials that artist Joshua Winer created in Watertown public schools, this painted wood and brass mobile was created in honor of a late, widely beloved teacher. The project offers one example of a successful process for integrating student learning with participatory art-making and community-building efforts.

**Process:** Patricia Mosley Hunt, a former teacher at Watertown Middle School, spearheaded this project to memorialize the late Peter B. Clough, a widely beloved fellow teacher. The school secured funding, including from the Watertown Cultural Council, to bring Joshua Winer, an accomplished public artist, into the school to co-create the memorial with students. Mr. Winer worked in collaboration with Ms. Mosely Hunt to translate student learning around public memory into a concept for the memorial. He also, and worked with art teachers to integrate the memorial project into their curricula.

**Town Role:** Public school educators and administrators played a key role in initiating this memorial and Mr. Winer's other school memorial project, and the project also involved other aspects of Town government.

### **Key Lessons:**

- Identify opportunities to integrate public arts and participatory art-making projects into school curricula, and, where possible, design curricula with potential public art opportunities in mind.
- Establish funding mechanisms to promote the development of public art in capital improvement projects in public construction projects, including public schools.
- Seek opportunities to embed artists-in-residence in Watertown public schools in order to bolster arts education and integrate art-making with other subject areas.

Ruth K. Henry

“The Time Is Always Right.”

2018. Exterior paint, aerosol/stencils, ceramic tile, cement backer board.

Watertown Boys and Girls Club, Watertown, MA



Figure 9: The completed mural at the Watertown Boys and Girls Club.  
Photo courtesy of Ruth K. Henry.

**Summary:** This multimedia mural, spearheaded by lifelong resident and Watertown Middle School teacher Ruth K. Henry, incorporates hand painted tiles painted by Watertown residents, that reflect Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s principles of nonviolence.

**Process:** The project stemmed from Ms. Henry’s involvement in the local Kingian Nonviolence Coordinating Committee, which runs a program to train Watertown residents and Town staff in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s principles of nonviolence. Ms. Henry chose the project site, a blank wall along the basketball court of the Watertown Boys and Girls Club, because of its significance to the local teenagers whom she hoped to involve in the project. To realize her vision, Ms. Henry built on existing local networks and found meaningful ways to involve a wide range of stakeholders, including Town staff, cultural institutions, and community-based organizations.

**Town Role:** Ms. Henry coordinated the project through the Watertown School Superintendent, so that the school system could function as a central hub for the project. Ms. Henry also secured support from the Recreation Department, which oversaw the basketball court adjacent to the mural site, the Police Department, and the Fire Department, which hosed down the wall in preparation for the installation.

**Key Lessons:**

- Identify opportunities to build on existing local relationships, networks, and initiatives by adopting a relational model of project development.
- Allow ample time for key phases: conceptual development, community engagement, and implementation. This project took around one year, with approximately six months devoted to conceptual development and outreach, and another six6 months devoted dedicated to implementation.
- Create multiple points of entry for participants and find meaningful ways to engage cultural institutions and community-based organizations as project partners.

Public Arts Selection in Watertown through WPACC: Case Study

**Gregg Bernstein.**

**“A Bicycle Ride Through Watertown” (AKA The Linear Path Mural).**

**2013. Acrylic paint.**

**Watertown Linear Path between Whites Avenue and Waverly Avenue, Watertown, MA.**



Figure 10: Students working on the Linear Path Mural (2013). Photo courtesy of Janet Jameson.

**Gregg Bernstein.**

**“Seeds of Change.”**

**2015. Acrylic paint and MDF boards.**

**Corner of Mt. Auburn Street and Melendy Avenue, Watertown, MA.**

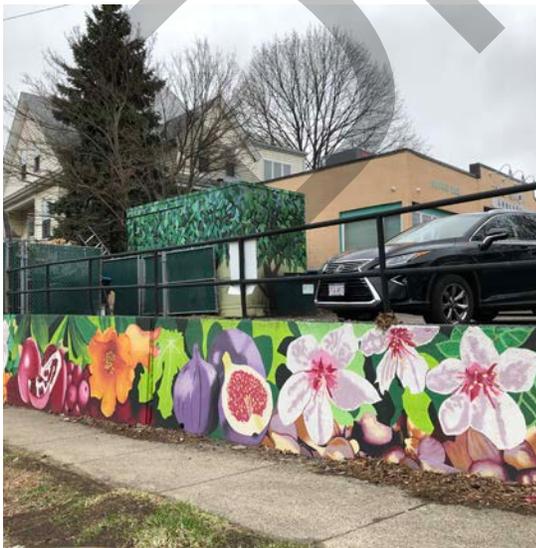


Figure 11, 12, 13, & 14 “Seeds of Change.” Photos courtesy of Annis Sengupta.

**Gregg Bernstein.**

**“Tapestry of Cultures.”**

**2014. Acrylic paint.**

**Baptist Walk, Watertown, MA.**



Figure 15: The completed mural on Baptist Walk. Photo by Anthony Pelton.

**Summary:** Between 2013-2015, the WPACC developed three murals across Watertown. Acting as an ad hoc, volunteer-led committee, the WPACC initiated and implemented all three murals. WPACC members identified and secured sites for all three projects, released and managed requests for proposals, coordinated community engagement, and raised funds for artist fees, materials, and maintenance through the Watertown Cultural Council, local and regional foundations, local businesses, and developers.

**Town Role:** Steve Magoon, Assistant Town Manager and head of the Planning and Community Development Department, played a key role as an advocate for these projects, particularly for the Linear Path Mural. The Town’s Recreation Department, led by Peter Centola, facilitated youth involvement in each project by recruiting student volunteers and holding liability for the students.

**Key Lessons:**

- Prioritize site selection at the outset of the project, maintain an inventory of potential project sites on public and private property, and develop and maintain relationships with private property owners to facilitate the site selection process.
- Establish clear and transparent artist selection criteria at the outset of each project and ensure that the art-selection panel meets at least once during the project conceptualization phase and at the end of the pre-final design phase.
- Formalize the role of the Watertown Public School System and Recreation Department as partners to facilitate youth involvement in public arts projects.
- Build and maintain relationships with the private sector to secure recurring contributions to the public art program and foster a culture of giving.
- Engage local businesses and community-based organizations as partners to build diverse audiences for the public arts program.

# Collections Management

## Summary

A key priority of this plan is to establish a public arts and culture program that is sustainable and responsive to community needs and values. An important aspect of this is ongoing documentation and maintenance of the Town's public art collection. Understanding the collection's history and current condition will not only help inform critical decisions about maintenance, but also can reveal opportunities to strengthen and expand the collection or pursue new initiatives that align with the program's guiding values.

## Documentation

Documenting and maintaining records of Watertown's public arts is a critical element of implementing a public arts program. As a first step, it is recommended that the Town institute a Public Arts and Culture Policy establishing the Town's Public Arts Collection, outlining criteria and procedures for the acquisition and accessioning of artworks into the Collection, procedures for collection maintenance, and criteria and procedures for deaccessioning artworks from the collection. In addition, the Public Arts and Culture Program staff may:

- Develop a policy for accessioning public art owned by the Town into the Public Art Collection, including criteria for reviewing artworks and recommendations for how maintenance and conservation of these artworks should be managed and funded. Evaluate artworks based on these criteria and bring forward candidates for accessioning, if any, for approval.
- Work with other Town departments to create a master inventory and archive of information about all Town-owned artworks, whether they are officially in the Public Art Collection or not.
- Ensure that artworks that are owned by Town departments, but are not part of the Collection, are added to the Public Art inventory that is maintained by Public Arts and Culture Program staff.
- Work with other Town departments to create a conservation assessment of all Town-owned artworks, whether they are officially in the Public Art Collection or not.
- Establish a policy for the stewardship of Town-owned artworks that have not been accessioned into the Collection.

*An initial inventory that lists known public arts and culture initiatives and installations in Watertown with artist and location information is included as an appendix to this document.*

## **Inventory for visual artworks**

- Title of installation
  - Date of installation\*
  - Location of installation
  - Description of installation
  - Lead artist(s)
  - Community partners/creative partners
  - Owner of work
  - Owner of property where artwork is sited
  - Budget, including funding sources and types (public, non-profit, individual, corporate, foundation)
  - Lead entity commissioning artwork
  - Artwork type (mural, sculpture, etc.)
  - Materials, if applicable
  - Documentation of the process
  - Images of the installed artwork
  - A copy of artist contracts
  - A copy of project correspondence and public records
  - Maintenance instructions provided by the artist and subsequent conservation records
  - A unique number assigned to the artwork
- \* Timeframe if it is a temporary installation

## **Documentation for events and festivals**

- Title of event/festival
- Location(s) of event/festival
- Description of event/festival
- Annual date(s) of event/festival
- Initial year of event/festival
- Artistic disciplines represented, e.g. visual art, music, theater
- Participating artists by year
- Funding provided to artists by year
- Funding sources for event/festival by type
- Funding amounts for event by source
- Attendance and participation in festival by type (vendor, staff, artist, volunteer, audience)
- Documentation of event/festival, including media clippings
- A copy of artist/performer contracts
- A copy of project correspondence and public records

An initial inventory that lists known public arts and culture initiatives and installations in Watertown with artist and location information will be provided to the Town as an electronic file.

## Deaccessioning

In addition to establishing criteria for accessioning public art that the Town owns into the Public Art Collection, the Public Arts and Culture Policy should establish clear criteria and procedures for relocating or deaccessioning works from the Collection.

In collaboration with the Watertown Historical Commission and other stakeholders with historical expertise, Public Art Program Staff should develop a policy for the management of commemorative works (monuments, memorials, or markers) on public property, whether or not they are part of the Public Art Collection. This policy should delineate administrative procedures and public process for accepting, altering, or deaccessioning a commemorative work, criteria (such as social and cultural merit, aesthetic, and technical considerations) for reviewing proposals, and recommendations for how maintenance and conservation of commemorative works should be managed and funded.



## Maintenance

The Town's Public Arts and Culture Policy should also include provisions and procedures for the conservation and maintenance of the Town's Public Art Collection. Ongoing care of public art can help foster public trust and future support for the program. Yet there is no one-size-fits-all approach to conservation and maintenance; each artwork in the collection will have different needs, depending on its materials, siting, and artistic intent. The following guidelines should inform the development of the conservation and maintenance provisions of the Public Arts and Culture Policy:

- Determine the artwork's intended duration at the outset of the project and include this information in the Project Scope.
- Include a line item for conservation and maintenance in the project budget and note this in the Project Scope.
- Develop a standardized maintenance and conservation worksheet and require artists to include a completed worksheet in their project proposal. The template should include a section on recommendations for routine maintenance, as well as a section for anticipated conservation measures.
- Identify anticipated conservation and maintenance needs prior to project fabrication and installation. The Town may require that artists work with a conservator during the proposal development process, or the Town may have design review documents reviewed by a conservator prior to fabrication or installation.
- The Town should develop documentation practices for assessing the condition of artworks in its Collection, and should regularly conduct, or hire a professional conservator to conduct, a survey of the condition of each work in the Town's Collection and make recommendations for conservation, cost estimates, and a recommended schedule for implementation.
- Determine who will be responsible for routine maintenance of artworks in the Town's collection: the department or entity responsible for maintaining the site where the art is located.



Figure 16. Plaque inside Watertown Town Hall, April 11, 2019

# Program Funding

Public arts programs typically draw on an array of funding sources, including municipal construction budgets, as well as contributions from private developers, grants from private foundations, corporate giving and sponsorship programs, and in-kind donations from local businesses. While many public arts programs have excelled at attracting funding from diverse sources to support innovative programming and initiatives, financial support for critical operations—administrative overhead, maintenance and conservation of existing artworks, and community engagement—has proven more challenging.<sup>7</sup>

These activities, however, are critical to the long-term success of any public arts program. Paid staff fulfill several vital roles, including managing and coordinating municipal boards and departments, grant writing and fundraising, and strategic planning that is not easily delegated to volunteers. Meager budgets for maintenance and conservation mean that existing public artworks are more likely

to fall into disrepair. In addition, without support for marketing and outreach activities, public art programs struggle to demonstrate their relevance to the larger community, perpetuating a vicious cycle of inadequate funding and political support.

For these reasons, it is important to secure a consistent source of funding through a percent-for-art program or a dedicated tax revenue stream and, if possible, to pool this money into a flexible fund that can be administered by the PACC. Program staff may augment core funding through grants, corporate sponsorships, and other funding mechanisms depending on the program's strategic priorities and staff capacity. A diversified funding strategy provides greater financial stability and can better support a multi-faceted programming strategy with the potential to fulfill a variety of strategic goals and reach diverse public audiences.



Figure 17. Mural by Felipe Ortiz, Aresenal Yards, 2019

Right page 40

8 City of Salem Public Art Master Plan (2013), p. 15.

9 Arlington County, Virginia Public Art Master Plan (2004), p. 33.

10 Cambridge, Massachusetts's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2.114 - Public Development Arts Projects. [https://library.municode.com/ma/cambridge/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodId=TIT2ADPE\\_CH2.114PUDEARPR](https://library.municode.com/ma/cambridge/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodId=TIT2ADPE_CH2.114PUDEARPR) (accessed December 19, 2019).

11 Cambridge, Massachusetts's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2.114 - Public Development Arts Projects. [https://library.municode.com/ma/cambridge/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodId=TIT2ADPE\\_CH2.114PUDEARPR](https://library.municode.com/ma/cambridge/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodId=TIT2ADPE_CH2.114PUDEARPR) (accessed December 19, 2019).

12 City of Ithaca Public Art Master Plan (2003), <http://www.cityofithaca.org/DocumentCenter/View/205/Ithaca-Public-Art-Plan-2003?bidId=>, p. 43.

13 Arlington County, Virginia, "Advisory Groups & Commissions," <https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/capital-improvement-program-cip-working-group/> (accessed December 18, 2019).

7 Americans for the Arts, "Percent-for-Art Programs," [https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/PublicArtAdvocacy\\_talkpnts.pdf](https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/PublicArtAdvocacy_talkpnts.pdf) (accessed November 15, 2019).

## Percent-for-Art

Percent-for-art is a public art funding mechanism in which a minimum percent (generally 0.5 to 2 %) of a jurisdiction's capital construction or renovation budget is set aside for the commissioning of public art. Percent-for-art programs are one of the most common strategies for securing stable, recurring funding for public art. Of the more than 400 public art programs in the U.S., the majority are funded by some form of percent-for-art strategy.<sup>8</sup> While program guidelines vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, these funding mechanisms are usually established by bylaw or ordinance.

Percent-for-art funding may be pooled and set aside to support a general public art fund or used to develop artworks that are responsive to and integrated with specific capital projects. The former strategy is preferable, as it gives the public art authority greater flexibility to commission projects aligned with the public art program's vision and objectives. That said, percent-for-art funding is often restricted by use and timeframe. For example, Arlington County, Virginia's public art master plan stipulates that public art funds only be used for permanent public art projects on County property or on costs related to developing such projects.<sup>9</sup> Cambridge, Massachusetts's public art ordinance stipulates that percent-for-art funds generated through capital construction and renovation budgets be used for the development and creation of arts in and upon the City's capital projects within three years of appropriation.<sup>10</sup> Although the program is not restricted to permanent art,<sup>11</sup> most of the funding has been allocated to brick-and-mortar projects due to constraints on public bonds.

Percent-for-art funding typically supports the integration of permanent artwork in a jurisdiction's public works projects, and thus provides an avenue for placing art on municipally owned or rented property. This approach enables artwork to be part of project planning from the beginning of the design phase. It also ensures adequate lead time for thoughtful consideration of a project's conceptual, aesthetic, and practical elements, while creating opportunities for early public comment and review—a key factor in successful public art projects.<sup>12</sup>

The process of identifying and prioritizing capital projects for public art integration also creates pathways for interdepartmental collaboration and can infuse consideration for the arts into a jurisdiction's municipal processes. For example, in Arlington County, Virginia, public art program staff participate in a Capital Improvement Program Working Group to help identify and prioritize needs for the county's capital budget.<sup>13</sup> These staff also serve on other interdepartmental committees to ensure that public art is integrated into capital projects.

**1. Percent of total capital budget.** This mechanism allocates a set percentage of a municipality's overall capital budget for public art. This means that capital expenditures unrelated to the construction or renovation of buildings and infrastructure—such as equipment purchases—are included in percent-for-art set-asides. This is typically structured as a line item in a municipality's capital budget for public art equivalent to 0.5 to 1 percent of the total capital budget.

**2. Percent of capital building and infrastructure budget.** Alternatively, percent-for-art can be structured so that it only applies to a jurisdiction's capital building and infrastructure budgets—for example, construction of a new school building or renovation of sidewalks. Under this mechanism, the funds generated may be restricted to public art projects for the construction project that generated the funding. As noted above, this strategy allows art to be integrated as early as possible in the project planning process.

**3. Percent on a case-by-case basis.** A third model generates percent-for-art funding only from selected capital projects. Under this model, a percentage of a project's construction cost is set aside in the project budget as a line item for public art. As in model 2 above, this strategy helps ensure that public art is planned for and budgeted at the onset of the capital project. However, it allows a jurisdiction to identify which capital projects should include public art. The greater flexibility of this approach also comes with a higher administrative cost, as it would require a robust internal process and criteria to identify which capital projects are eligible and suitable for public art. As in model 2, above, this model could restrict funds to the capital projects that generated the funding.

## Other Public Funding Sources

- **Annual allocation in the Town budget.** The Town of Arlington, MA has used this approach. An annual allocation to the Arlington Commission of Arts and Culture from the Arlington municipal budget grew tenfold from 2014 to 2019 as Arlington Public Art, the Arlington Cultural Council and the Arlington Cultural District came under the Commission's umbrella. The allocation represents just under half of the Commission's annual budget and a portion of it supports a public art consultant for Arlington Public Art.
- **Parking meter revenue.** The Town of Maynard, MA has used this approach.
- **Local option tax revenue.** In 2010, Watertown exercised its local option for collecting meals and occupancy tax, which generated over \$700,000 in FY20. The town has not exercised its local option for a marijuana tax. In 2017, New Bedford, Massachusetts, committed half of the revenues from its hotel tax to a fund dedicated to arts, culture, and tourism promotion.<sup>14</sup>
- **Funds through larger grants.** For example, MassDOT transportation funding for Complete Streets planning could be used to support the integration of public art into improvements to public transportation facilities. Funds allocated to recreation and historic preservation can, in some cases, support the incorporation or restoration of public arts components.



Figure 18. Mural by Kim Carlino, Arsenal Yards, 2019

14 Jennette Barnes. "New Bedford will put 50 percent of hotel tax into arts-only fund." South Coast Today, January 13, 2017. <https://www.southcoasttoday.com/news/20170113/new-bedford-will-put-50-percent-of-hotel-tax-into-arts-only-fund>

## Public Art in Private Development

Increasingly, jurisdictions are adapting percent-for-art models to secure funding for public art from private developers. Approximately 100 municipalities in the U.S. have a Public Art in Private Development (PAPD) ordinance.<sup>15</sup> These ordinances vary in their scopes and guidelines, but most require developers to allocate a certain percentage of a project's construction budget to a public art fund or to commission site-specific work on a per-project basis.

It is worth noting that mandatory percent-for-art ordinances may antagonize developers and be more appropriate for municipalities with many developers competing for projects. In municipalities with weaker markets, a voluntary or semi-voluntary approach may be the more prudent choice.

Arlington County, Virginia, encourages developer contributions through a mandatory meeting with Public Art Program staff prior to filing a site plan application in order to address public art as one of five community benefits developers are expected to address. At this pre-filing meeting, the developer and county staff assess opportunities for integrated public art on-site and discuss the appropriateness of a Public Art Fund contribution versus an on-site commission. According to the county's administrative code, the developer must include documentation that they met with Public Art Program Staff in their site plan application in the form of a memo. This pre-filing mechanism allows public art program staff to emphasize public art as a community benefit and fosters a culture of communication among developers and county staff.

According to one Arlington County Public Art Program staff member, developers are generally expected (though not required) to contribute \$75,000 for County-initiated public art projects on public property through a cash contribution to the Public Art Fund. Less commonly, developers may opt to include public art within their site plan. In this case, the developer must work with the County's Public Art Program staff and follow the county's commission process. The County's

Public Art Master Plan generally recommends contributions to the Public Art Fund, except where art on-site furthers the objectives offered in the Public Art Master Plan.

Other jurisdictions have adopted voluntary policies that offer developers a menu of options. These may include two or more of the following:

- Contribute to a public art fund (typically a small fee assessed per square foot of development). This may set a maximum contribution and/or be restricted to developments with budgets over the specified threshold. Alexandria, Virginia, calculates the value of a contribution at the rate of \$.30 per gross square foot up to a maximum amount of \$75,000 for each building.
- Install and maintain public art on-site, according to the jurisdiction's Public Art Master Plan process and guidelines.
- Provide free space within the jurisdiction for use by a local arts organization. This approach is used by Rockville, Maryland.



Figure 19. Mural by Ouizi Jones, Aresenal Yards, 2019

15 Daniel Grant, "Developers Fight Efforts to Make Them Pay for Public Art," *The New York Times*, July 10, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/10/business/art-real-estate.html>.

## Other Potential Funding Sources

While percent-for-art policies can be effective vehicles for integrating artworks into the public realm, they have some shortcomings. Because of limitations placed on government bonds, artwork funded through public percent-for-art programs typically must be a permanent feature of a publicly funded construction project. The result? Public percent-for-art funds cannot fund ephemeral public art initiatives, such as temporary exhibitions, performances, municipal partnerships, and artist residencies. Below are some fundraising strategies that can be used in lieu of, or as a supplement to, percent-for-art funds to maximize the creative potential of new projects.

### Partnerships with local arts organizations:

**Benefits:** Build local support for public arts by tapping into existing networks and audiences, and build goodwill by avoiding competition for limited funds.

**Challenges:** Difficult to sustain partnerships over time as organizational priorities and programming strategies shift.

### Contributions from individual donors and private foundations:

**Benefits:** Can support more innovative and partnership-based initiatives.

**Challenges:** For grants, time-consuming application and reporting processes. For donors, time consuming relationship-building processes. Tends to privilege established and well-endowed organizations with staffing, resources, and networks to develop successful proposals and pitches.

### Contributions from local businesses:

Ideal for high visibility projects, such as temporary exhibitions, performances, and programming. Contributions could also be solicited from through an annual or semi-annual campaigns for Public Art Fund.

**Benefits:** Cultivating a culture of giving among local businesses can provide a stable funding stream. Often fewer reporting requirements than other types of grants. Successful partnerships can be a long-lasting and reliable source of funding.

**Challenges:** If a company does not have an established philanthropy program, it may require more work to determine the company's priorities and develop a partnership. May require the coordination of special donor-only events.

### Crowdfunding:

**Benefits:** Generates buzz, buy-in, and pride for a project.

**Challenges:** Must develop a strong, creative marketing strategy; time consuming to promote the project and manage rewards for donors.

### Funds generated from festivals, fairs, and special events:

**Benefits:** Watertown already has an annual public event, Faire on the Square. A small portion of proceeds from this event could go toward public art.

**Challenges:** Event fees would potentially need to be raised to generate a meaningful contribution to a Public Art Fund.

# Additional Public Arts Policy Considerations

## **Intellectual Property, and Copyright, and Legal Title of Artistic Works**

The Town's Public Arts and Culture Policy should include language about intellectual property and copyright, and legal title of public artworks funded in whole or in part by the Town. In general, for permanent works of public art, the Town would own the physical work and copyright would be retained by the artist, with reproduction rights allowed to the Town for appropriate promotional and educational purposes. Each project contract should also spell out the intellectual property, legal title, and copyright, and patents or other title rights in or to the artwork with respect to the Town, artist, and property owner, if applicable. Contract language should be consistent with the provisions of the federal Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990.

## **Public Art on Private Property**

The Town's Public Arts and Culture Policy should also describe the permissions and approvals process for public art to be located on private property. The Policy should also establish clear rules for artists to display their work as public art on private property. If the Town develops a requirement for public art in private development, the Town's guidelines, policy, or ordinance should spell out expectations regarding care and maintenance of the work. Guidelines should be consistent with the federal Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990.

DRAFT

# Implementation Matrix 2020 - 2025

## Legend

	Policies and Procedures		Program Design
	Management and Administration		

## Public Arts in the Era of Covid-19

In the midst of drafting this plan document, the arrival of the global COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the underlying conditions that shaped much of this plan. Implementation of the plan's recommendations in the first year will need to respond to the shifting realities of life during a pandemic and recession. Although implementation may be slower, it is important that it continue. The importance of the arts, and particularly public arts, in supporting community vitality and connectedness has only grown in this period of social separation. The need for meaningful collective experiences set in Watertown's outdoor areas is pressing. And the need for collective recovery, renewal and remembrance is on the horizon. Establishing and investing in Town

Time	Item	Action
YEAR ONE	1A	Set up structure for Public Arts and Culture Committee (PACC), conduct outreach to prospective members through Town Council and Department of Planning and Community Development. Appoint committee members through Town Manager with approval through Town Council.
	1B	Assess the technical and content expertise needed to support the appointed Public Arts and Culture Committee and Public Arts and Culture program staff and recommend the appointment of standing or ad hoc committees or working groups to meet those needs.
	1C	Allocate 2021 resources through Town Council appropriation to cover the hire of part-time staff capacity and/or to establish programmatic funding to start-up program. Continue allocation of current town staff time towards start-up administration of program and to serve as liaison to the PACC.
	1D	Develop diversity equity, and inclusion policy that will inform project selection criteria, Public Arts and Culture Committee and selection panel appointment criteria, and guide the provision of translation and interpretation resources to augment Public Arts and Culture Program communications.
	1E	Draft and adopt Watertown Public Arts Policy outlining goals, values, and priorities of the Public Arts Program, PACC structure, staffing, funding sources and decision-making processes.
	1F	Establish curatorial vision and programmatic priorities through PACC in alignment with Watertown's public art values.
	1G	Conduct virtual outreach to the artistic community for networking and ongoing COVID-19 response initiatives through PACC.
	1H	Establish partnerships with local cultural organizations and community service providers and organize temporary art projects to build community connections in the wake of COVID-19.

processes to foster public arts and culture as part of public life will support Watertown’s ongoing recovery and renewal after the pandemic has ended.

### Getting Started

Implementation in the first year will involve establishing structures and policies and initiating programming within the constraints of COVID-19. The first steps are to create a formal, appointed Public Arts and Culture Committee (PACC) with established membership, staffing, and terms and committing a municipal funding stream to support the Committee’s work. The PACC will adopt the Public Arts Master Plan and draft a Public Arts Policy outlining goals, values, committee structure,

staffing, funding sources and decision-making processes for approval by Town Council and the Town Manager.

As part of drafting this policy, the PACC should draft a diversity, equity, and inclusion policy to guide committee appointments, project selection, selection committee appointments, and priorities. In the first year, the Committee will establish a foundation for arts and culture programming by establishing a curatorial vision and evaluation priorities and by using virtual convenings to network and partner with local artists and arts and culture organizations to identify challenges related to COVID-19 and create programming to build community during the pandemic.

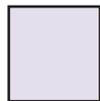
	Topic	Sub-Topic	Aligning Value(s)
	Management and Administration	Organizational Infrastructure	Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Management and Administration	Community Expertise	Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Policies, Procedures, and Funding	Funding	Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Policies, Procedures, and Funding	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown’s Past, Present, and Future
	Policies, Procedures, and Funding	Policies	Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Program Design	Curatorial Vision	Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown’s Past, Present, and Future; Make Connections to Nature and Sustainability
	Program Design	Community Engagement and Partnerships	Bolster Creativity in Community Life
	Program Design	Community Engagement and Partnerships	Foster Diversity and Interaction; Bolster Creativity in Community Life

## Building Momentum

The second year of implementation will build the capacity of the PACC to tackle larger projects and initiatives. Creating a staff position to support the PACC for an arts administrator within the town government will be a priority. In addition, drafting procedures for allocating public art funds and managing selection processes; and establishing a policy regarding copyright of artistic works

will enable the PACC to initiate Calls for Art and Artists. Committee staff will build relationships across relevant Town departments to expand the PACC's capacity to coordinate with other Town priorities and activities. Building relationships with organizations and institutions, including the public school system, will help the Committee to identify new opportunities for public arts and culture in town.

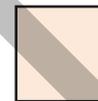
### Legend



Policies and Procedures



Management and Administration



Program Design

Time	Item	Action
YEAR TWO	2A	Convene staff in town departments that will advise on project siting, installation, and maintenance to share Public Arts Policy -- including curatorial vision and programmatic priorities: Recreation, Public Works, Purchasing, Town Counsel.
	2B	Develop clear process for Town Council to approve public art funding allocations annually.
	2C	Develop procedures and criteria to guide artist selection, project selection, and site selection. Ensure application and selection procedures track priority metrics identified in program evaluation design.
	2D	Develop policy in regards to intellectual copyright of artistic works that is in line with national public arts best practices.
	2E	Establish program evaluation priorities and metrics to guide ongoing learning and assessment of the quality and impact of calls for art, ongoing public arts initiatives, and partnerships through PACC. Develop and administer evaluation tools to track Public Arts and Culture Committee, sub-committee, and selection panel demographics as well as recipients of program funding.
	2F	Virtually convene cultural organizations and community service providers to explore partnerships to sponsoring public arts opportunities in the public realm and in arts and cultural institutions located in Watertown through PACC.
	2G	Identify private establishments and institutions that serve as hubs for community social and cultural events to partner on sponsoring public arts opportunities with the Town of Watertown.
	2H	Partner with colleagues in the public school system to identify opportunities to align current arts curriculum and activities with public arts opportunities in public places and spaces in Watertown.

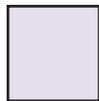
## Expanding Impact

Starting in year three, the PACC will establish working groups and ad-hoc standing committees to support its work, particularly in relation to public school partnerships and connections to nature and sustainability. PACC will begin to manage the execution of projects initiated in year two, and by year four will start drafting

policies related to collections documentation and management. By year five, the Committee should begin a comprehensive review of monuments and memorials in town, conduct a preliminary evaluation of completed projects, and explore revisions to its adopted policies and procedures as needed.

	Topic	Sub-Topic	Aligning Value(s)
	Management and Administration	Interdepartmental Collaboration	Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Policies, Procedures, and Funding	Funding	Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Policies, Procedures, and Funding	Selection of Artists, Projects, and Sites	Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Policies, Procedures, and Funding	Intellectual Copyright of Artistic Works	Bolster Creativity in Community Life; Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Program Design	Evaluation	Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown's Past, Present, and Future
	Program Design	Community Engagement and Partnerships	Foster Diversity and Interaction; Bolster Creativity in Community Life
	Program Design	Community Engagement and Partnerships	Foster Diversity and Interaction
	Program Design	Community Engagement and Partnerships	Foster Diversity and Interaction; Bolster Creativity in Community Life

## Legend



Policies and Procedures



Management and Administration



Program Design

Time	Item	Action
YEAR THREE	3A	Manage execution of programming in public buildings and on public property including the town hall, library, and parks, open spaces, and squares.
	3B	Create a youth advisory group for PACC to advance public engagement of youth arts leaders to support partnership with Watertown Public Schools.
	3C	Support professional development of Town staff and Public Arts and Culture Committee members by providing access to public art professional development opportunities.
	3D	Establish regular networking opportunities for Watertown artistic community through PACC.
	3E	Convene Town staff, cultural organizations and community service providers to identify opportunities for collaboration and emerging priorities through PACC.
	3F	Develop goals, guidelines, and strategic framework for PACC-led initiatives that center and celebrate the local natural landscape and/or promote sustainability in partnership with Conservation Commission and Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee.
YEAR FOUR	4A	Develop policies and procedures for public art inventoring, placement, conservation and maintenance (funding levels and priorities), deaccessioning, and acquisitions (purchases, donations, and loans).
	4B	Partner with Watertown Public Schools and Watertown Cultural Council to create a program for emerging artists in grades K-12.
YEAR FIVE	5A	Convene a special ad-hoc committee charged with conducting a comprehensive review of Watertown's commemorative landscape (monuments, memorials, and markers, and festivals/events with a commemorative purpose sited on Town property or sponsored by the Town). Special committee will conduct historical research and a robust public process to identify potentially controversial commemorative works and festivals/events, and present PACC with recommended strategies to address controversial works through recontextualization, relocation, or removal.
	5B	Review public art policies and procedures and adopt amendments as appropriate for achieving program goals.
	5C	Conduct Public Arts Program evaluation through PACC based on priorities and metrics established in Year One.

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Sub-Topic</b>	<b>Aligning Value(s)</b>
	Management and Administration	Program Implementation	Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Management and Administration	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown's Past, Present, and Future
	Management and Administration	Professional Development	Foster Diversity and Interaction
	Program Design	Community Engagement and Partnerships	Bolster Creativity in Community Life
	Program Design	Community Engagement and Partnerships	Foster Diversity and Interaction; Bolster Creativity in Community Life
	Program Design	Curatorial Vision	Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown's Past, Present, and Future; Make Connections to Nature and Sustainability
	Policies, Procedures, and Funding	Collections Management	Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships
	Program Design	Community Engagement and Partnerships	Foster Diversity and Interaction; Bolster Creativity in Community Life
	Management and Administration	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown's Past, Present, and Future
	Policies, Procedures, and Funding	Program Implementation	Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown's Past, Present, and Future; Make Connections to Nature and Sustainability
	Program Design	Evaluation	Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown's Past, Present, and Future

# Appendices

## **Appendix 1: Current Processes for Selection, Management, and Funding of Public Arts in Watertown**

Below, we have provided detailed case studies of five recent public art projects in Watertown. These projects have emerged on an ad hoc basis and in response to local circumstances, with organizers seeking the support and approval of specific Town departments and individual Town staff as needed. The Town currently does not play a role in maintaining these works, and there is no standard process that governs how maintenance is managed or funded. Despite their disparate origins, collectively these projects demonstrate the value of a public arts program that is not only responsive to local needs and concerns but that also takes advantage of existing and emergent networks and relationships to facilitate community-driven projects. discussion with the Advisory Committee.

# Case Study 1

**Joshua Winer.**

**“Peter B. Clough Memorial Mobile.”**

**1999-2000. Mixed media.**

**Watertown Middle School, Watertown MA.**

This project—one of two memorials that artist Josh Winer created in Watertown public schools—was developed through an interdisciplinary process that infused student learning about public memory into a participatory art project. Patricia Mosley Hunt, a former Global Studies teacher at Watertown Middle School, spearheaded the project, which grew out of a desire to memorialize a Peter Clough, a deceased former Global Studies teacher.

In a combined Global Studies and English course, Ms. Mosley Hunt and her students began studying the ways that communities memorialize people and events. Building on a curriculum from Brookline MA-based non-profit Facing History and Ourselves, Ms. Mosley Hunt and her students studied memorials and their meanings and paired this learning with an exploration of Mr. Clough’s life in order to consider how they might construct art to remember him.

The school secured funding and brought Mr. Winer, an accomplished public artist, into the school to co-create the memorial with students. Over the course of one month, Mr. Winer worked with students in Ms. Mosley Hunt’s class and the school’s art classes to develop the memorial to Mr. Clough. In Ms. Mosley Hunt’s classroom, students brainstormed themes, ideas, and images with Mr. Winer, and considered questions of intent, message, audience, and medium. Eventually, they settled on a globe-like structure, ringed by a series of plates, each of which symbolized a value that Peter held and tried to inculcate in the school.

According to Ms. Mosley Hunt, the project was developed in anticipation of renovations to the Middle School building. She and other members of the school community knew that the new space would feature a large atrium with high ceilings, so the memorial was designed to function an installation that could convey Mr. Clough’s and the wider school community’s values of welcoming and embracing difference.

Prior to this project, Mr. Winer also created The Meredith Kamm Memorial (1998-1999), a mixed media mural in the lobby of Watertown High School created in honor of a former student.



Figure 1: “Peter B. Clough Memorial Mobile.” Watertown Middle School. Photo courtesy of Joshua Winer.

## Case Study 2

**Ruth K. Henry.**

**“The Time Is Always Right.”**

**2018. Exterior paint, aerosol/stencils, ceramic tile, cement backer board.**

**Watertown Boys and Girls Club, Watertown MA.**

### Genesis of the Project | Putting Principles of Nonviolence into Practice:

This multimedia mural project, spearheaded by lifelong Watertown resident and local Middle School teacher Ruth Henry, represents an example of a privately developed, sited, and funded project that functions as public art because of its prominent outdoor location near Watertown’s civic core.

The project stemmed from Ms. Henry’s involvement in the local Kingian Nonviolence Coordinating Committee, which runs a program to train Watertown residents and Town staff in Martin Luther King Jr.’s principles of nonviolence. According to Ms. Henry, her intent with this project was to translate the momentum from the Committee’s programming into a participatory mural that represented Dr. King’s six principles of nonviolence. She began by selecting a site: a blank wall along the basketball court of the Watertown Boys and Girls Club as the project site, reasoning that the location was a popular destination for the local teenagers whom she hoped to involve in the project.

To bring her vision to life, Ms. Henry developed a creative concept—a participatory mosaic mural composed of hand-painted tiles that reflected individual interpretations of Dr. King’s principles of nonviolence. To complement the project’s participatory ethos, she designed a strategy intended to bring together key institutions and departments in Watertown, create multiple entry points for meaningful and creative public participation, and include activities for people of all ages. The entire project took approximately one year, with approximately six months devoted to conceptual development and outreach, and another six months devoted to implementation.

### Municipal and Institutional Support:

Ms. Henry began by asking a police lieutenant who had completed Kingian Nonviolence training to meet with the director of the Boys and Girls Club, Renée Gaudette. Once she had secured Ms. Gaudette’s approval, Ms. Henry coordinated the rest of her efforts through the Watertown School Superintendent, in the hope that the school system could function as a hub for the project. From there, she proceeded to secure support from the Recreation Department, which oversaw the basketball court adjacent to the mural site, as well as the Police Department. Even the Fire Department participated: they hosed down the wall in preparation for installation.

Ms. Henry also recognized the importance of involving cultural institutions and community-based organizations to extend the project’s reach and foster new, cross-sector connections. She secured the support of both the Mosesian Center for the Arts and Hatch Makerspace, both of which agreed to host tile-making workshops for the project. The Mosesian Center integrated its workshop with its free Family Fun Day, while Hatch hosted three workshops—two for tile making and one for mosaic-making. Each organization contributed in other ways, too: the Mosesian Center did all kiln firing for the project, while Hatch opened their space to the mural crew for a handful of additional mosaic building sessions and stored mural panels in their space. According to Ms. Henry, the experience “brought the two organizations together” in a new way, fostering connections in a somewhat fragmented cultural landscape. Hatch’s involvement also helped broaden participation in the project: they publicized tile-making workshops and recruited workshop participants, including residents of a local elder-care facility.



Figure 2: The completed mural at the Watertown Boys and Girls Club. Photo courtesy of Ruth K. Henry.

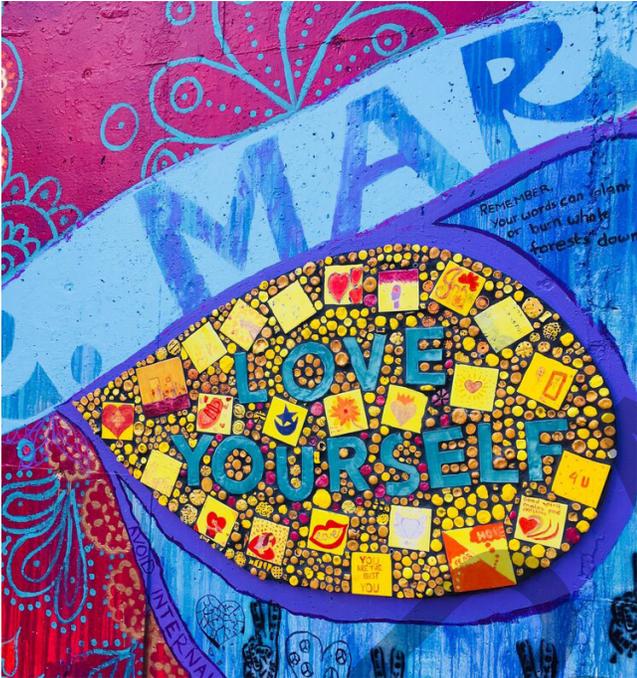


Figure 19: Closeup of a mosaic in the finished mural. Photo courtesy of Ruth K. Henry.

**Participatory Engagement and Design:**

Over nearly six months, Ms. Henry collected contributions from institutions and organizations across Watertown. Adults enrolled in a local anti-racism class, students at the Mosesian Center, and students at Watertown Middle School and High School all designed stencils and tiles for the mural. The mural’s execution was similarly participatory: middle and high school students, as well as adult volunteers all helped prepare the wall, paint the final mural, and install mosaic panels. By the time of the project’s completion, Ms. Henry had engaged 12 town departments and organizations, including over 400 residents ages 2-100 in its creation. At the dedication ceremony, Bernard Lafayette, a leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and a contemporary of Dr. King, spoke alongside the family of someone who had died on the basketball court—a reflection of the project’s deep resonance and reach.

Several interviewees cited Ms. Henry’s project as an example of what a successful public art project could look like in Watertown. In their remarks, interviewees remarked on Ms. Henry’s multifaceted approach to engagement: she secured key commitments from local organizations and Town staff, generated meaningful opportunities for a diverse cross-section of Watertown residents to participate, created a work of art that resonated with progressive community values, and amplified the site’s importance as a gathering place.



Figure 20: Workshop participants designed and painted their own tiles that reflected their interpretation of Dr. King’s principles of nonviolence. Photo courtesy of Ruth K. Henry.

## Case Study 3-5

### WPACC-produced murals

The following three case studies reflect the stories behind three of Watertown’s murals: “A Bicycle Ride Through Watertown” (AKA the Linear Path Mural), two iterations of “Tapestry of Cultures,” and “Seeds of Change.” All three projects were independent ventures that the resident-led WPACC organized within three years. Although the WPACC initiated, planned, and fundraised for all three murals, artist Gregg Bernstein notes that Steve Magoon (assistant Town Manager and head of the Planning and Community Development Department) played a key role as an advocate for these projects, particularly for the Linear Path Mural. In addition, the Town’s Recreation Department, led by Peter Centola, facilitated youth involvement in each project by recruiting student volunteers (students were asked to provide a CV and submit a formal application) and by developing agreements that held the Recreation Department liable for student participants.

According to WPACC member Aramais Andonian, the total budget for each mural—including site preparation, materials, artist fees, stipends for students, and maintenance—ranged from approximately \$14,000 to \$30,000. Although the Watertown Cultural Council provided a small grant for the first mural (“A Bicycle Ride Through Watertown”), most support for all three projects came from local businesses and individuals. WPACC volunteers leveraged local connections to secure small-scale cash contributions (on the order of \$200-400) as well as in-kind donations from individuals and local businesses. For example, Sherwin Williams donated paint for all three murals, Home Depot provided brushes and other equipment, and Tufts Healthcare made in-kind donations to help clean and prepare walls for painting through their employee service program.



Figure 21: “A Bicycle Ride Through Watertown.” Photo courtesy of Annis Sengupta

# Case Study 3

**Project Team: Gregg Bernstein (project director), Liana Aleksanyan, Sondas Alnamous, Faiza Amin, Marvin Aramthip, Isabella Carton, Julia Harrington, Emily Hart, Veronica Torres, Abigail Vershbow.**

**“A Bicycle Ride Through Watertown.”**

**2013. Acrylic paint. Watertown Linear Path between Whites Avenue and Waverly Avenue, Watertown MA.**

## **Genesis of the Project | Planning for the Watertown Community Path**

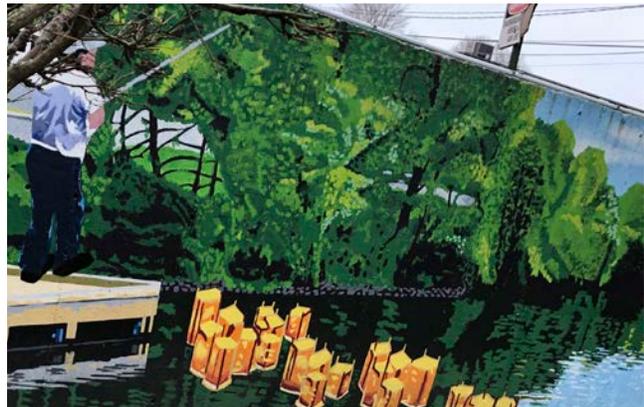
In 2010, a group of five students enrolled in Tufts University’s Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning Program produced a report with guidelines and recommendations for a proposed, multi-use Watertown Community Path. Although the report did not include a specific recommendation for integrating art along the path, one of the authors, Eric Giambone, mentioned the idea to WPACC members Deborah Peterson and Janet Jameson. (Both Ms. Peterson and Ms. Jameson were also leaders of two other local groups with an interest in the project: the ad hoc Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee and Watertown Citizens for Peace, Justice and the Environment.) Ms. Peterson and Ms. Jameson subsequently brought the idea to the attention of Danielle Evans, a staff member in the Watertown Department of Planning and Community Development and secured permission for a mural project from the owner of a 207-foot concrete service wall along the path.

Permission in hand, Ms. Peterson and Ms. Jameson teamed up with members of the nascent Watertown Public Arts and Culture Committee to organize a request for proposals for a community mural, which they sent to a targeted list of local mural artists. Intrigued, Mr. Bernstein applied. Although he was less experienced than other applicants, the Committee selected him based on his experience working with young people and the quality of his previous artistic work.

## **Youth Engagement in Concept Development**

Other than a general desire to develop the mural through a community-engaged process, the Committee did not mandate a specific theme, concept or medium. To this end, the WPACC’s agreement with Mr. Bernstein gave him freedom to determine the artistic expression, design, and materials of the artwork, and simply specified that he meet with local high school students as early as possible in the schematic development process. Mr. Bernstein’s began by giving a presentation at Watertown High School, which inspired several students to volunteer for the project. Donna Calleja, the high school art teacher, also helped recruit students to join the core project team. In order to mitigate the Committee’s liability for student participants, the Town’s Recreation Department facilitated a formal process by which students could apply to join the project team.

In 2013, the Massachusetts Cultural Council granted the project a Gold Star award for community engagement.



*Figure 22: “A Bicycle Ride Through Watertown.”  
Photo courtesy of Annis Sengupta*

## Resident Engagement and Input

To gather public input, the project team set up boxes around town with a questionnaire. Reasoning that the mural's audience would primarily be Watertown residents, the project team asked people to share what they wanted to see in a mural about Watertown, as well as what they loved about the town. They received 1,000 surveys, but the responses were, in Mr. Bernstein's words, "all over the place" and difficult to analyze. After the survey had closed, Mr. Bernstein took reference photos of everything that respondents had suggested, from "the buildings on Arsenal Street" to "the Girl's field hockey team."

## Thematic and Design Development

Based on this research and engagement, Mr. Bernstein developed a schematic proposal for the mural, which he submitted to the WPACC for review and approval. Eventually, the Committee chose a theme that they hoped would encompass everyone's suggestions: a bicycle ride through Watertown. Next, Mr. Bernstein revised his schematic proposal into a detailed design proposal for review by WPACC. The agreement between Mr. Bernstein and the committee specified that this proposal should include graphic materials and written specifications, a description of installation methods, a prefabrication review carried out by an art conservator provided by the Committee at its discretion, a plan for routine maintenance, a list of Core Team members, and a detailed budget including but not limited to a cost estimate for materials, surface preparation, fabrication and installation, and artist fee, and a timeline demonstrating that the Artwork can be completed within the scope of the commission.

According to Mr. Bernstein, the overall design process revealed some issues with the WPACC's fluid approach to curation. Various members of the Committee had differing opinions about which elements and local imagery to include in the final design. In the end, Mr. Bernstein revised his sketch three times. Finally, the project was ready to execute. Over the course of seven weeks that summer, Mr. Bernstein and the core project team transformed their interpretations of Mr. Bernstein's reference images into a 7-foot high, 207-foot long mural on a blank wall along the path.

## Leveraging Local Business Support

In order to support the project, WPACC members secured grants from Watertown Savings Bank, Belmont Savings Bank, Watertown Community Foundation, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (a Watertown-based engineering firm), The Hamilton Company (a local developer and owner of the mural site), Sasaki Associates, and \$950 from the Watertown Cultural Council. The Town did not provide financial support for the project. The total project budget was \$14,000, which included a \$10,000 artist's fee for Mr. Bernstein and approximately \$2,000 earmarked for maintenance. Student participants did not receive stipends for their work on this project.

## Maintenance

At the outset of the project, the Committee and Mr. Bernstein established a written agreement that delineated Mr. Bernstein's responsibilities for routine maintenance of the mural. This document stipulated that Mr. Bernstein would be responsible for routine repairs to the mural within one year of the project's completion at no cost to the Committee. It also specifically limited Mr. Bernstein's responsibility to repair damage due to acts of vandalism and acts of God. In addition, the Committee established a separate agreement to address vandalism. This contract, which was modeled on an example from the Cambridge Arts Council, stipulated that Mr. Bernstein would be responsible for covering the first such repair for free; after this point, the WPACC would be obligated to pay \$1,000 for future repairs. Since the project's completion in 2013, the WPACC has hired Mr. Bernstein three times to remove graffiti and repaint the mural. Funding for these repairs has come from the project's \$2,000 maintenance fund.

Given the targeted nature of this vandalism, Committee members suspect that the person responsible took issue with specific content, likely based on a personal dispute with an individual depicted in the mural. The mural's relatively secluded location may also have made it an appealing target.



Figure 23 & 24: "A Bicycle Ride Through Watertown." Photo courtesy of Annis Sengupta



# Case Study 4

**Project Team: Gregg Bernstein (project director), Aaseia Ahmed, Liana Aleksanyan, Marvin Aramthip, Katy Bedig, Caitlyn D'Amico, Brianna Hache, Julia Harrington, Emily Hart, Sedra Katerji, Alain Mondesir, Svetlana Sheehan, Abigail Vershbow. "Tapestry of Cultures."**

**2014. Acrylic paint. Baptist Walk, Watertown MA.**

## **Genesis of the Project | Youth Engagement in a Two-Phase Process**

As with a "A Bicycle Ride Through Watertown," Mr. Bernstein collaborated with a group of local students to conceptualize and execute this project. Mr. Bernstein and the WPACC developed the project in two separate iterations, beginning with a modular installation at Watertown High School and culminating in a large-scale mural on a blank wall in the heart of Watertown Square.

The project grew out of a conversation that Watertown High School art teacher Donna Calleja had with students about what ideas were unique to their community. In the spring of 2014, Calleja reached out to Gregg Bernstein and invited him to begin to explore this theme with a group of interested students through a visual artwork for an exhibition at the high school's library.

Through a collaborative process led by Mr. Bernstein, students envisioned a concept that would weave Watertown's diverse cultures into a tapestry-like motif. They began by researching Watertown's cultural communities, supplemented their research with ideas collected from the Linear Path mural public engagement process, and developed imagery that Mr. Bernstein could translate into a mural design. Throughout the spring, students worked under the auspices of an after-school program to translate Mr. Bernstein's design into a series of panels that were assembled into a modular mural. The mural, which was installed in the High School's library, served as a study for an outdoor mural that eventually took shape in Watertown Square.

## **From Public School to Public Space**

The team's goal, according to Calleja, was to create a work of public art that would celebrate the identity of the Watertown community as one that is welcoming to, and benefits from, differences. Building on their work in the high school, Ms. Calleja, Mr. Bernstein, and the students decided to translate their design to public space by establishing a mural that could be a welcoming and visually appealing gateway to town. First, however, they needed a location.

In keeping with their vision for a gateway, Committee members met with local property and business owners to identify a suitable site. Lexus of Watertown, located on Arsenal Street near the intersection of School Street, had a prime location along a busy thoroughfare, but Committee members were concerned that the proprietor would desire too much oversight of the mural's content. Eventually, the Committee approached local property owner Myer Dana and Sons about a blank wall facing Mt. Auburn Street at the gateway to Watertown Square, reasoning that the location would afford the project team more creative freedom. The space was not perfect: its proximity to an active parking lot presented the potential for damage from vehicles. However, its prominent location near Watertown Square presented the perfect opportunity for the WPACC to realize their gateway concept. Working full-time over two months during the summer of 2014, Mr. Bernstein and a team of 12 students—many of whom had worked on the mural in the High School library—translated their tapestry concept to the wall.



Figure 8: "Tapestry of Cultures," Baptist Walk, Watertown. Photo by Anthony Pelton.



### Securing a Major Grant to Spur Local Support

Building on their award for the Linear Path Mural, the WPACC secured a \$15,000 grant from Fund for the Arts, New England Foundation for the Arts' public art program to support "Tapestry of Cultures." This grant allowed the Committee to amass more funding for their second mural. As with the Linear Path Mural, local companies and organizations provided financial support. In addition to \$8,000 from AthenaHealth, the Committee secured donations from Watertown Savings Bank (\$3,500), the Watertown Community Foundation (\$2,500), and the owner of the mural site, Myer Dana and Sons (\$2,000). All told, the budget for "Tapestry of Cultures" totaled \$31,000—more than twice as much as the budget for the WPACC's first mural along the Linear Path. In addition to dedicating a line item for maintenance in the project budget, the WPACC offered small stipends for student artists. These ranged from \$274 to \$880, based on the number of hours of work, and were distributed in two installments throughout the summer. Mr. Bernstein received an artist fee of \$16,000, distributed in three installments of \$3,000 each, plus a final payment of \$7,000.<sup>16</sup> As with the Linear Path mural, the project budget also included a dedicated line item for maintenance.

Figure 26: "Tapestry of Cultures." Photo courtesy of Annis Sengupta

<sup>16</sup> Income and Expenses for Summer 2014 Mural Art Project, September 17, 2014. Document courtesy of Janet Jameson.

## Case Study 5

**Project Team: Gregg Bernstein (project director), Aaseia Ahmed, Faryal Amin, James DeRocher, Sara Fulton, Brianna Hache, Julia Harrington, Emily Hart, Svetlana Sheehan, Abigail Vershbow, Isabella Vitti.**

**“Seeds of Change.”**

**2015. Acrylic paint and MDF boards.**

**Corner of Mt. Auburn Street and Melendy Avenue, Watertown MA.**

### **Genesis of the Project | Highlighting Personal Experiences of Immigration and Engaging Local Businesses Through Storytelling:**

A \$2,000 grant from the Watertown Community Foundation provided the initial funding for this mixed-media project, which honored and engaged with the experiences of immigrant business owners through oral histories, murals, and creative wayfinding. Although the WPACC had developed previous public art projects through close collaboration with students in Watertown High School, the Foundation’s grant stipulated that a more intentional community engagement strategy should inform both the project’s conceptual development process and the final product. As with previous WPACC-initiated mural projects, Mr. Bernstein worked with a team of local high school students to develop the overall concept: a mural that reflected local stories of immigration and food culture, based on interviews with predominantly Armenian business owners in Coolidge Square. Working with Mr. Bernstein, students visited several businesses, including a barber shop and Armenian markets and invited them to share their personal stories of immigration and daily life in Watertown.

### **Challenges Aligning Concept and Location:**

In a departure from the WPACC’s previous projects, “Seeds of Change” began on uncertain footing. Although the project team had identified their site of interest—Coolidge Square’s small businesses—

the WPACC had not secured a space for the mural. Without a location to define the physical scope of their work, the project team struggled to synthesize and refine the results of their interviews into a cohesive concept. WPACC members took up the role of location scout, talking to dozens of business and property owners in the Square. Eventually, the Committee selected a site: two small, blank walls next to Uncommon Grounds, a local café in Coolidge Square. Although the location did not offer much visibility, the café’s owner was generally on good terms with the WPACC, so Committee members felt that partnering with him would provide the path of least resistance.

Building on this research, the project team decided that the mural should depict fruits commonly found in Armenian and Middle Eastern cultures. Mr. Bernstein translated their concept into a small-scale mural, spread across two adjacent (albeit less than ideal) surfaces: a low, angled retaining wall separating the sidewalk from a raised lot, and a refrigeration unit in the lot beside Uncommon Grounds in Coolidge Square. In a subsequent second phase of the project, the students designed and fabricated a set of fruit-shaped wayfinding signage. According to Mr. Bernstein, the mural and signage never gelled into a coherent work, and he regrets not having focused more on the individual business owners and their stories, rather than on the symbolic elements of their experiences.

## Leveraging Community Foundation Funding for Private Donations

In contrast to “Tapestry of Cultures,” WPACC struggled to raise funds for this project. One previous major donor, AthenaHealth, had been acquired, and the company’s new leadership declined to contribute. However, the WPACC did manage to secure grants from Tufts Health Plan Foundation (\$7,000), Watertown Savings Bank (\$2,500), Dunkin Donuts (\$1,000), Toyota of Watertown (\$1,000), and Coolidge Square I, LLC (\$1,000) (owner of the parcel on Mt. Auburn Street between Kimball Road and Arlington Street), and local resident John Airasian (\$250), in addition to the initial \$2,000 grant from the Watertown Community Foundation. Committee members also attempted to secure funding from local business owners in Coolidge Square but were not successful, likely because of the narrow profit margins of these small businesses.

In total, the WPACC managed to amass a budget of \$14,750—just shy of the budget for the Linear Path mural project but far short of the budget for “Tapestry of Cultures.” Of this, \$11,000 went to an artist fee for Mr. Bernstein, and approximately \$3,000 went to stipends for student participants. (Students were paid at a rate of \$4/hour.) As with the previous two murals, the project budget also included a dedicated line item for maintenance. While the project has not required any major maintenance since completion, the property owner occasionally trims vegetation in front of the mural.

## Reflections on Process and Priorities:

This project represented the last collaboration between the WPACC and Gregg Bernstein. Although local business owners expressed interest in continued creative collaborations, the project’s uneven process revealed fractures within the WPACC. According to Mr. Bernstein, various members of the group began to gravitate toward different artistic media and programming priorities; some Committee members preferred murals, while others wanted focus on storytelling, wayfinding, and signage. This not only complicated Mr. Bernstein’s efforts to manage the competing desires and priorities of WPACC members but also made it difficult for the group to align on a strategic direction to move forward.

Despite these difficulties, the project received a 2016 award for Environmental Preservation from the Watertown Historical Commission. The award recognizes projects that improve properties that have fallen into disrepair or neglect.



Figure 4: “Seeds of Change.” Photo courtesy of Annis Sengupta.

# Appendix 2:

## Summary of Outreach and Engagement Activities

### Advisory Committee Meetings

The Advisory Committee met four times throughout the Master Planning Process. The group discussed the following issues at each meeting:

1. April 2019 Kick-off Meeting
  - Welcome, Introductions, Overview to the Planning Process
  - Roles and Responsibilities
  - Project Goals, Objectives, Scope of Work, and Q&A
  - Project Startup Questions
  - Data requests
  - Engagement inquiries – what are some upcoming events that may inform the process?
  - Candidates for Project Advisory Committee: who is missing?
  - What's Next
  - Tour of Arts and Culture Assets in Watertown
2. July 2019 – Meeting #2
  - Welcome and Introductions
  - Vision and Values for Public Art in Watertown
  - Engagement Strategy
  - Data Collection
  - Next Steps and Closing
3. September 2019 – Meeting #3
  - Welcome and Introductions
  - Community Engagement and Data Collection Updates
  - October 30th Public Forum Agenda and Preparation
  - Research Update
  - Next Steps and Closing
4. December 2019 – Meeting #4
  - Welcome and Introductions
  - Fall Forum Recap
  - January 30th Public Forum Agenda and Preparation
  - Master Plan Draft Review
  - Next Steps and Closing

### Informational Interviews and Outreach

To ensure that the planning team was gathering input from a diverse range of stakeholders in Watertown, the MAPC engagement team (Emma Boast and Iolando Spinola) conducted outreach to and one-on-one informational interviews with people who represented hard-to-reach populations in Watertown. These conversations ensured that diverse voices were heard and that their participation was invited into the process. Over the course of summer 2019, the Engagement team contacted the following people:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Outreach Members</b>	<b>Organization/Contact and Details</b>
7/8	Iolando Spinola	Donna Calleja Former Watertown Arts Teacher
7/12	Emma Boast	Saeed Pirooz at Iranian Association of Boston
7/12	Emma Boast	Philippa Biggers at Project Literacy
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	A Barber Shop: 5 Main St, Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Janier Barber Shop: 123 Mt Auburn St, Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Molana Restaurant: 5 Spring St, Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Roksana's Persian Food: 509 Mt Auburn St, Watertown MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	C Hair Studio: 8 Mt Auburn St, Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Tranquility Day Spa: 15 Spring St, Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Watertown Laundromat: 119 Mt. Auburn St Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	John's Tailoring: 129 Mt. Auburn St. Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	The Comic Stop: 134A Main Street Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	The Thread & Wax Bar: 11 Spring Street Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Sunshine Massage: 15 Spring St, Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Starbucks: 75 Mt Auburn St, Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Crown Cafe: 106 Main St, Watertown, MA
7/19	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Kefi's Kitchen: 142 Main St, Watertown, MA 02472
7/29	Emma Boast	Saeed Pirooz at Iranian Association of Boston
8/5	Iolando Spinola	Adrienne Sloane at Munroe Center for the Arts
8/5	Emma Boast	Saeed Pirooz at Iranian Association of Boston
8/6	Iolando Spinola	Anne-Marie Gagnon Council on Aging/Watertown Food Pantry
8/6	Iolando Spinola	Romualda (Roma) Jerome Watertown Community Foundation
8/7	Iolando Spinola	Leone Cole, Watertown Free Public Library Director
8/14	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Charlie Bresitrose, Watertown News
8/14	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Renee Gaudette and Kerry Evans, Watertown Boys and Girls Club
8/14	Iolando Spinola	Rebecca Margoli, Mosesian Center for the Arts
8/15	Emma Boast	Renee Gaudet at Watertown Boys and Girls Club re: survey and engagement at 9/10 Open House
8/16	Iolando Spinola	Dan Hogan, News Producer at Watertown Cable Access Corp
8/16	Iolando Spinola	East End Watertown eastendwatertown.com
8/16	Iolando Spinola	Sasaki Foundation
8/16	Iolando Spinola	Stephanie Venizelos, Community Wellness Program Manager
8/16	Iolando Spinola	Ellen Wineberg and Cathleen Daley at Room 83 Spring
8/16	Iolando Spinola	Watertown Citizens for Black Lives/Watertown Citizens for Peace, Justice, and The Environment
8/16	Emma Boast	Jan Singer at Watertown Community Foundation to follow up on leads to religious institutions
8/16	Emma Boast	Anne-Marie Gagnon, Watertown Council on Aging to follow up about sharing survey via food pantry
8/19	Emma Boast	Saeed Pirooz at Iranian Association of Boston
8/19	Emma Boast	Stephen Nyakairu at Grace Chapel
8/20	Emma Boast	Church of the Good Shepherd
8/20	Emma Boast	Diane Murphy and Patricia Richardson of Watertown Housing Authority
8/20	Iolando Spinola	Alexandra Lee Executive Director at the Sasaki Foundation
8/27	Iolando Spinola	Alexandra Lee and Alicia Deluga at the Sasaki Foundation
9/2	Iolando Spinola	Watertown Citizens for Peace, Justice and the Environment
9/3	Emma Boast	Ann Callahan (local activist; former Learning Center Coordinator, Watertown Housing Authority)
9/9	Emma Boast	Jan Singer of Watertown Community Foundation
9/9	Emma Boast	Ruth Henry (local artist and teacher)
9/9	Emma Boast	Chantal Zakari (local artist)
9/10	Emma Boast	Ora Grodsky of Watertown Community Conversations
9/11	Emma Boast & Iolando Spinola	Susan Kuder of World in Watertown
9/12	Emma Boast	Gregg Bernstein (local artist)
9/13	Iolando Spinola	Tony Palomba at Watertown Citizens for Peace, Justice and the Environment
9/13	Emma Boast	Sue-Ellen Hershman-Tcherepnin and Philippa Biggers re: Project Literacy

# Pop-Up Engagement Strategy

During the summer of 2019 the MAPC team and members of the Advisory Committee reached out to the public at popular events throughout the Town of Watertown. Popping up at these events helped attract potential new stakeholders to attend the Public Forums and encouraged them to stay engaged in the process after the completion of the Plan.

During these pop-up engagements residents were introduced to the WPACK kit and were asked to fill out a survey which was based on that kit to convey their priorities for their preferences and locations for public art within that neighborhood.

## Pop-up Station Design

Whenever the engagement team popped up at an event, the following elements were used to create a welcoming environment to engage the public:

### Materials:

- Card table, table cloth, and chairs
- Pop-up tent (optional) for shade
- Paperweights and tape for collateral

### Set up for the station:

- Table and chairs set up
- Tablecloths
- Hang or place boards on easels
- Signage/Banner
- Survey packet on table
- Postcards and sign-up sheet on table

### Collateral:

- WPACC banner
- Boards and easels
- Printed/bound WPACK Kit
- Surveys in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Pashtu
- First forum event flyer in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Pashtu
- Sign-up sheet for Public Arts Master Planning Process as well as the Watertown Public Art Committee
- Half-sheet flyer with general information about the process, a timeline, and link to sign up and learn more.

## Locations for Pop-up Engagements

During the summer of 2019, the Engagement Team and Advisory Committee members popped up at the following locations to distribute information and engage people in the Master Planning process:

## Surveys

Surveys were inspired by the WPACK Kit, offering a way for the public to provide feedback on the types of public arts that they would like to flourish in Watertown. The surveys also inquired about people's preference for the areas where they would like these artistic practices to be located, and collected basic demographic information to ensure that survey respondents reflected Watertown's demographic diversity. Over the course of the planning process, the project team collected 440 survey responses. To learn more about the results of the survey, see Appendix 4.

## Translation of Surveys:

Surveys were translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Pashtu. These languages were chosen because they are the most popular second languages spoken in Watertown High School. Although the translated surveys may have signaled an openness to ideas from all Watertown residents, no filled-out surveys were received in any language other than English.

## Promotional Materials

To promote the Public Forums, promotional materials were distributed at the pop-up events. Content was developed by MAPC in consultation with the Advisory Committee, and the design was completed by Advisory Committee member Araamais Andonian.

Copies of the promotional materials may be found below.



Figure 25: Pop-up Engagement, Summer 2019

## Promotional Materials



# Putting the “Public” in Public Arts

*What should public arts in  
Watertown look like?*

**Wednesday, October 30, 2019 | 6:00-8:30 pm  
Watertown Middle School, 68 Waverly Ave.**

Who is the “public” in public arts? And how can we imagine new kinds of creative expression in the public realm? We want to hear from you so that we can shape the future of public arts in Watertown together.

Join the Watertown Public Arts Master Plan Advisory Committee on October 30 for a community conversation and workshop on Watertown’s first-ever **Public Arts Master Plan**.

Light dinner refreshments provided. Free childcare will be available upon request.

Your participation is important to us. Call 617-933-0700 for accommodations. Advance notice (10 business days) is necessary for certain accommodations.

**FREE and open to the public. Please register at:**

[mapc.ma/watertownoct30](http://mapc.ma/watertownoct30)

In addition to this event, there will be a second public workshop on Monday, December 9, 2019.

To stay up to date on the project and receive announcements about the second workshop, sign up for our mailing list: [mapc.org/watertownpublicartmasterplan](http://mapc.org/watertownpublicartmasterplan)

  
How can we help? Let us know.  
[ispinola@mapc.org](mailto:ispinola@mapc.org) | 617-933-0713





# Getting it Done: Creating A Thriving Public Arts Ecosystem in Watertown

*How can we create the conditions for public arts to thrive in Watertown?*

*What are some strategies for designing an inclusive and democratic public arts program and process?*

*Who should be involved in supporting and carrying out these strategies?*

Join the Town of Watertown’s Public Arts Master Plan Advisory Committee on **January 9** for a workshop exploring how we can shape a public arts program that speaks to Watertown’s community values.

You’ll have the opportunity to learn about inspiring examples of public art programs both here in Massachusetts and around the country. You’ll also engage in small group discussions where you’ll have an opportunity to weigh on preliminary recommendations for how the Town of Watertown can manage, fund, and maintain a public arts program starting in 2020.

Whether you’re a new or lifelong resident, a student, a teacher, a local business owner, or an artist, your input is vital and will help inform the Town’s decisions about how the town’s public art program will be managed and funded.

Dinner refreshments provided. Free childcare and interpretation and translation services are available upon request.

Your participation is important to us. Call (617) 933-0713 or email [ispinola@mapc.org](mailto:ispinola@mapc.org) for accommodations. Advance notice (10 business days) is necessary for certain accommodations.

**RSVP LINK: [mapc.ma/watertownjan9](http://mapc.ma/watertownjan9)**

## When:

**January 9, 2020**

6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

## Location:

**Watertown Free Public Library**

123 Main St,  
Watertown, MA 02472  
*Watertown Savings Bank  
Meeting Room*

**FREE and open  
to the public**

Light dinner refreshments provided.

Free childcare available up-

**WATERTOWN  
Public Arts Master Plan**



# Public Forums

Two Public Forums were organized as part of the Watertown Public Arts Master Planning process in order to gather input from the general public.

## Pop-up Station Design

Whenever the engagement team popped up at an event, the following elements were used to create a welcoming environment to engage the public:

### Materials:

- Card table, table cloth, and chairs
- Pop-up tent (optional) for shade
- Paperweights and tape for collateral

### Set up for the station:

- Table and chairs set up
- Tablecloths
- Hang or place boards on easels
- Signage/Banner
- Survey packet on table
- Postcards and sign-up sheet on table

## Forum #1: Vision and Values

On Wednesday, October 30, MAPC's Arts and Culture department, Watertown's Department of Community Development and Planning, and the resident-led Watertown Public Arts and Culture Committee (WPACC) co-hosted the first of two public forums on the Watertown Public Arts Master Plan. The forum drew 74 attendees who participated in hands-on activities, facilitated dialogue, and creative brainstorming sessions designed to generate discussion about the future of public arts in Watertown. In addition to local artists, educators, and advocates, the attendee list included six of Watertown's nine Town Councilors: Lisa Feltner, Anthony Donato, Caroline Bays, Susan Falkoff, Anthony Palomba, and Vice President Vincent Piccirilli.

The evening kicked off with a presentation by representatives from the Town, WPACC, and MAPC, as well as a series of informal talks from local artists. Middle School Spanish teacher and artist Ruth K. Henry shared the story of developing a participatory mural at the Watertown Boys and Girl's Club, while artists Mike Mandel and Chantal Zakari spoke about their practices as public artists. Participants then joined a series of breakout discussions and activities, including a creative mapping exercise in which participants shared personal memories of significant places in Watertown and a facilitated discussion—complemented by emoji sticker voting—designed to build consensus around core values for public arts in Watertown.

# Forum #1

## Agenda:

### Goals:

- Demonstrate why Watertown needs a Public Arts Master Plan.
- Create an engaging space to envision public arts opportunities in Watertown.
- Generate interest and enthusiasm about engaging with public arts and artists.
- Connect with people who would not ordinarily participate in a public arts planning process.
- Collect information that will inform the Master Plan – and the eventual public arts program – as it goes forward.

### Objectives

- Shared preliminary results about residents' public arts interests and shared feelings about the Town's current collection of public arts.
- Created opportunities for people to provide input on the kinds of public arts they would like to see throughout Town.
- Facilitated interactive break-out sessions that encourage participants to expand their imagination of public arts' possibilities and envision public arts opportunities in Watertown.
- Created a space for meaningful conversations where MAPC serves as a convener to elevate the expertise of local people who have the capacity to develop more public arts opportunities.
- Refined values for the Public Arts Master Plan.

### Audiences

- Artists and other creatives who could make or have input into public arts opportunities.
- General public who have been engaged during the summer pop-ups.
- Community leaders including city officials, heads of local non-profits and other organizations located in Watertown.

### Activities:

#### Memory Maps

Inspired by a participatory mapping project designed by New York-based exhibition design firm Local Projects and nonprofit City Lore, participants were invited to reflect on personally meaningful places and people in Watertown. Participants wrote reflections on pieces of translucent vellum and pinned these to an abstract map, approximating the location in which that memory took place. This activity helped shape recommendations for potential locations for public arts and programming, as well as recommendations guiding the program's curatorial direction.

#### Refining Values

This activity invited participants to collectively develop a list of values that could inform recommendations for funding sources, management structures, decision-making processes, and programming priorities for public arts in Watertown. The activity was structured to facilitate a dialogue to refine a set of values that the Advisory Committee had started to envision, and to create opportunities for people to express their feelings about each idea.

# Forum #2

## Getting it Done: Creating a Thriving Public Arts Ecosystem in Watertown

On Thursday, January 9, 2020, 54 people gathered at the Watertown Free Public Library for Getting it Done: Creating a Thriving Public Arts Ecosystem in Watertown. The second and final of two public events to inform the development of the Watertown Public Arts Master Plan, this event invited those who live, work, and play in Watertown to learn about strategies for developing a successful public arts program.

### Goals

- Create opportunity to share knowledge on how public art programs generally operate, and their goals and objectives.
- Share back what we heard (from Oct 30) about values that are important to guiding the establishment and implementation of a public arts program in Watertown.
- Create opportunity for people new and returning to this project to provide meaningful input on draft recommendations.

### Objectives

- Participant feedback (comments, suggestions) on the draft recommendations to guide our revisions.
- Communication of the Town's next steps (finalizing the plan with the Advisory Committee, presenting it for Town adoption, and Town Council request for starter funding to implement first year activities).

### Audiences

- Community leaders including city officials, heads of local non-profits and other organizations located in Watertown.
- Artists and other creatives who could make or have input into public art opportunities.
- General public who was engaged during the Master Planning process.
- Representatives from local social service provider organizations.

### Activities

Due to close coordination among Watertown's Department of Community Development and Planning, the resident-led Watertown Public Arts Master Plan Advisory Committee, and MAPC staff, the meeting drew a mix of artists, local leaders, educators, and other residents to envision the staffing, decision-making structures, and engagement strategies necessary to create a successful public arts program.

The event kicked off with remarks from Watertown Town Council President Mark Sideris and a brief presentation from Jenn Erickson, Director of Arts and Culture for MAPC. Participants then engaged in guided, small group discussions where they brainstormed and explored approaches public arts administration, staffing, and decision-making; shared ideas for continued community engagement, and envisioned what success would look like over the next five years.

# Appendix 3: Copy of Public Arts Interests Survey



## **WATERTOWN** Public Art Master Plan



### **PUBLIC ART INTERESTS SURVEY: TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!**

The Town of Watertown is working with local consultants to develop a **Public Art Master Plan** to guide implementation of the Watertown Public Art & Culture Committee's work. Established as an ad-hoc committee of the Town, the Committee is working to integrate artworks and the ideas of artists into a variety of public settings for the benefit of the people of Watertown and visitors to the community.

In 2018, the Committee published the Watertown Public Art and Culture Kit (WPACK) in order to generate ideas and support for public art. The Committee seeks your input on how to put the ideas and inspiration captured in the WPACK into action. **Please take a moment now to complete this survey and tell us about the types of public art you hope to see more of in Watertown!**



**INSTRUCTIONS**

This survey reviews different types of public art that were highlighted in the Watertown Arts & Culture Kit. What types of public art are you interested in seeing more of in Watertown?

1. On each page, review the images below each heading as you consider each type of public art.
2. Use the scale next to each heading to indicate your interest in having that type of public art in Watertown.
3. At the end of the survey, tell us which page of examples most interests you and help us document existing art in Watertown.
4. Return your completed survey to the WPACC Committee member who handed it to you or drop it in the WPACC box at the Watertown Public Library.
5. Sign up to be notified when findings are shared at a public Watertown Public Art Workshop in the fall:  
[www.mapc.org/watertownpublicartmasterplan](http://www.mapc.org/watertownpublicartmasterplan).

Please share the following information to help us track engagement:

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Do you rent or own your home?  Rent  Own

Household Info (please share the number of people in your household)

\_\_\_ # Age 0-19 \_\_\_ # Age 20-40 \_\_\_ # Age 40-65 \_\_\_ # Age Over 65

How do you identify Yourself? (circle all that apply)

White African American Asian Hispanic/Latino Other \_\_\_\_\_

What language(s) do you speak at home? (circle all that apply)

English Spanish Pashtu Portuguese Arabic Other \_\_\_\_\_



# Public Art and Events

How interested are you in having each type of public art in Watertown on a scale of 1 (very uninterested) to 5 (very interested)?

**Memorials**      Very uninterested      ① — ② — ③ — ④ — ⑤      Very Interested



**Outdoor Sculpture**      Very uninterested      ① — ② — ③ — ④ — ⑤      Very Interested



**Murals**      Very uninterested      ① — ② — ③ — ④ — ⑤      Very Interested



**Events and Performance**      Very uninterested      ① — ② — ③ — ④ — ⑤      Very Interested



# Streetscape Art

How interested are you in having each type of public art in Watertown on a scale of 1 (very uninterested) to 5 (very interested)?

**Art in Transportation**      Very uninterested      ① ——— ② ——— ③ ——— ④ ——— ⑤      Very Interested



**Art in Wayfinding**      Very uninterested      ① ——— ② ——— ③ ——— ④ ——— ⑤      Very Interested



**Art in Furniture**      Very uninterested      ① ——— ② ——— ③ ——— ④ ——— ⑤      Very Interested



**Art in Sidewalks**      Very uninterested      ① ——— ② ——— ③ ——— ④ ——— ⑤      Very Interested



# Sensory Art



How interested are you in having each type of public art in Watertown on a scale of 1 (very uninterested) to 5 (very interested)?

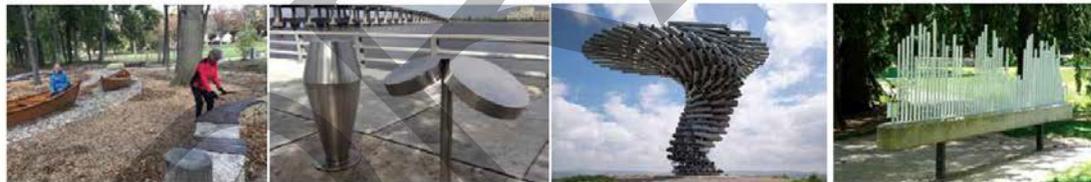
**Interactive Art**      Very uninterested      ① ——— ② ——— ③ ——— ④ ——— ⑤      Very Interested



**Artistic Lighting**      Very uninterested      ① ——— ② ——— ③ ——— ④ ——— ⑤      Very Interested



**Art with Sound**      Very uninterested      ① ——— ② ——— ③ ——— ④ ——— ⑤      Very Interested



**Social Practice Art**      Very uninterested      ① ——— ② ——— ③ ——— ④ ——— ⑤      Very Interested



(Art focused on engagement through interaction and civic dialogue.)



# Architectural Art

How interested are you in having each type of public art in Watertown on a scale of 1 (very uninterested) to 5 (very interested)?

## Art in Building Exteriors

Very uninterested (1) — (2) — (3) — (4) — Very Interested (5)



## Art in Building Interiors

Very uninterested (1) — (2) — (3) — (4) — Very Interested (5)



## Art in Fences and Barriers

Very uninterested (1) — (2) — (3) — (4) — Very Interested (5)



Which page of examples are you most excited about? (check one)

- Public Art & Events**
- Art in Nature**
- Streetscape Art**
- Architectural Art**
- Sensory Art**

## THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE PUBLIC ART INTERESTS SURVEY!

For more information about this project, please visit.

[www.mapc.org/watertownpublicartmasterplan](http://www.mapc.org/watertownpublicartmasterplan)

Are you (check all that apply):

- An artist?**

Artistic Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Info \_\_\_\_\_

- A representative of an arts or cultural organization?**

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Info \_\_\_\_\_

- A resident interested in arts and culture?**

- Other? Please Describe** \_\_\_\_\_

**What arts or culture assets should we include in our inventory?**

Please include the name and location of the asset and a short description of why it should be included.

**WATERTOWN**  
Public Art Master Plan





# Watertown Public Arts Interest Survey Findings

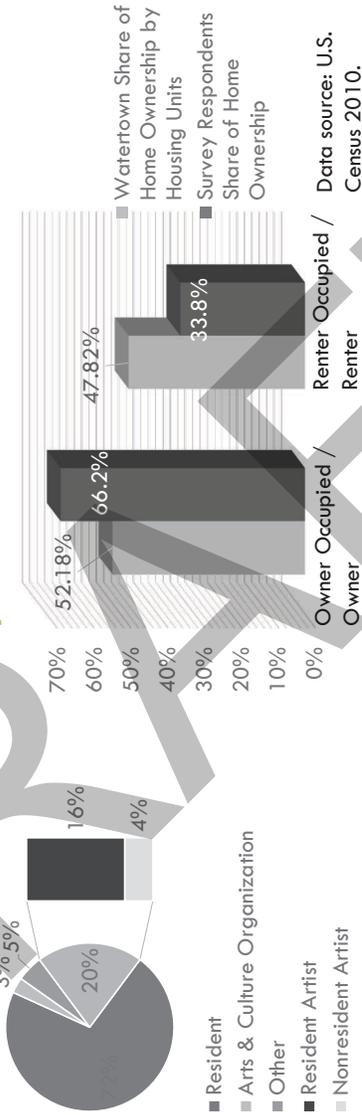


## Whom Did We Reach?

### Survey Respondent Overview

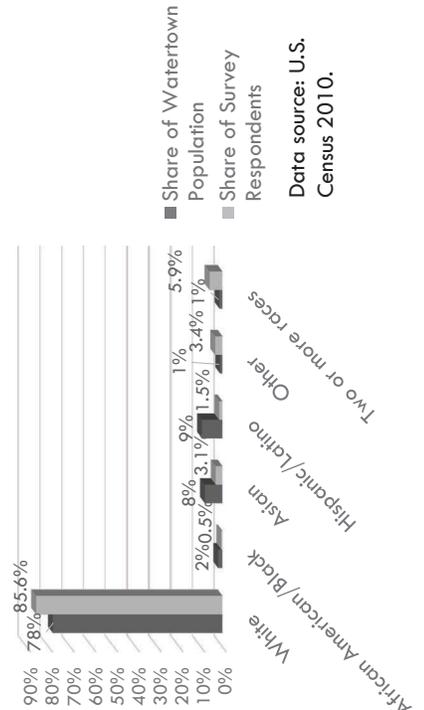
- 440** Total responses
- 88%** of respondents were Watertown residents
- 20%** of respondents were artists

### Home Ownership among Survey Respondents Compared with Watertown.



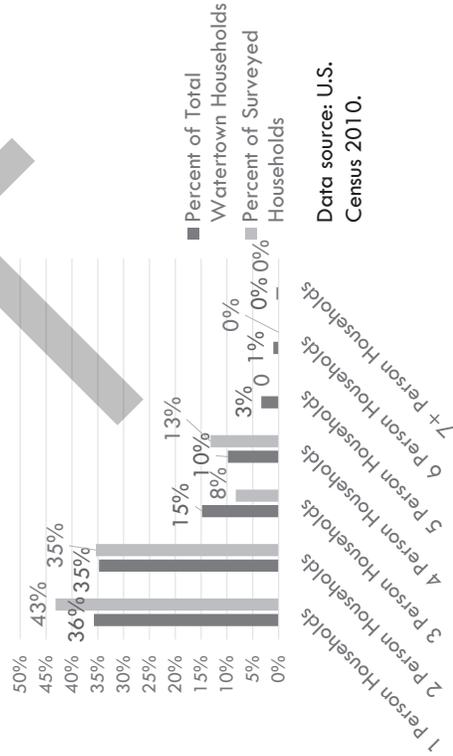
Data source: U.S. Census 2010.

### Race and Ethnicity among Survey Respondents Compared with Watertown.



Data source: U.S. Census 2010.

### Household Size among Survey Respondents Compared with Watertown.



Data source: U.S. Census 2010.

# What Did We Learn?



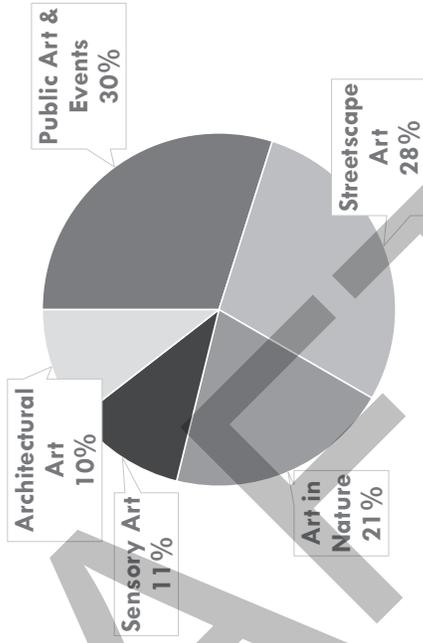
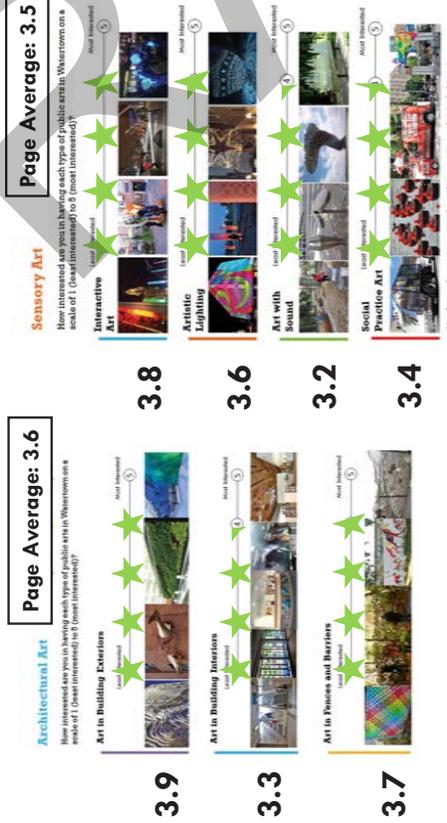
Public Arts that generated the MOST interest:

- Murals
- Landscape Art

Public Arts that generated the LEAST interest:

- Memorials

Which page of examples are you most excited about?



## ABOUT THE SURVEY

The Watertown Public Arts Interest Survey collected data on public art preferences from residents and workers in Watertown from July, 2019 through the end of November, 2019. The survey was administered in hard copy and online and available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Pashto. It was distributed at community events throughout the summer and fall and promoted on the Watertown and MAPC webpages. The content provided was repackaged from the Watertown Public Arts and Culture Kit designed by Aramais Andonian and compiled by the Watertown Public Arts and Culture Committee, an ad-hoc committee of Watertown residents committed to expanding public arts and culture in Watertown.

## Appendix 5: Program Design Case Examples from Forum #2

*This is a sample list of public art projects and initiatives administered by public art programs in other jurisdictions that align with the Watertown public art values.*

Aligning Value:

### **Bolster Creativity in Community Life**

**Topic: Providing Professional Development and Funding Support for Emerging Artists**

**Program Name:** Public Art Bootcamp

**Place and Dept. Name:** Seattle, WA: The Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS)

**Overview:** This program is for emerging artists looking to become more engaged with public art, creating culturally relevant artworks which resonate with city populations. The city provides a “boot camp” that aims to help prepare artists who are interested in working in the public realm. The program also commissioned 14 temporary public arts projects for the summer of 2018.

**Value of the Award:** Attendees may attend the boot camp at no cost. Upon completion of the program, artists are provided with access to stipends to commission their own projects.

**Selection Criteria:** Not eligible if the artist has received any public arts award for more than \$5K.

Aligning Value:

### **Center Local Context and Identities in Engaging with Watertown’s Past, Present, and Future**

**Topic: Soliciting Calls for Art that Honor History and the Current Experience**

**Project Name:** Call for a 2D Work of Art for a City/County Building

**Place:** City of Brookings, South Dakota

**Overview:** The Brookings Public Art Commission, in partnership with the City of Brookings, SD, has released a Call for Art seeking an artist to design, fabricate and install 2D artwork in a public area of the shared use City/County building that honors the history, cultures, and current experience of Brookings County, SD residents.

**Value of the Award:** \$10,000 commission.

**Selection Criteria:** The Call is open to all artists residing in South Dakota or in a neighboring state. One artist will be selected based on their past work which exhibits style and materials appropriate to the site, the artist’s biography, recommendations, and a strong letter of intent .

Aligning Value:

**Foster Diversity and Interaction**

**Topic: Collaborating with Public Schools for Creative Youth Development**

**Program Name:** The Urban Arts Fund (UAF)

**Place and Dept. Name:** Denver, CO: Denver Public Art

**Overview:** The Urban Arts Fund (UAF) is a graffiti prevention and youth development program that “provides access to positive, creative experiences for youth and transforms dilapidated areas into well-tended and active community gathering spaces.” The program focuses on the prevention of unsanctioned graffiti through the creation of culturally relevant murals by local artists with local youth. Lead artists (adults) must include programming for youth development and engagement in their projects.

**Value of the Award:** Ranges from \$2,000 to \$8,000.

**Selection Criteria:** The program is open to all artists but gives preference to well-planned youth development and community engagement plans, first time applicants, as well as projects in neighborhoods with few or zero UAF murals.

Aligning Value:

**Make Connections to Nature and Sustainability**

**Topic: Celebrating an Underutilized Greenway with Performances and Public Art**

**Project Name:** Woonasquatucket River Greenway Arts

**Place:** Providence, RI

**Overview:** The City of Providence Department of Art, Culture + Tourism, along with cultural partners staged a series of public art projects and performances along the Greenway, highlighting the potential for a permanent linear art park connecting downtown to emergent arts institutions and diverse residential neighborhoods.

**Value of the Award:** The City has made (2) awards of \$7,500 each for site-specific public art installations on the river.

**Selection Criteria:** RFQ process – <https://artculturetourism.com/rfq-woonasquatucket-river-greenway/>

Aligning Value:

**Solidify Commitments to the Public Arts through Stable Funding Investments, Policies, and Partnerships**

**Topic: Building Art into Public Infrastructure in Partnership with the Local Business Community**

**Program Name:** Art in Public Spaces

**Place and Dept. Name:** Mill Valley, CA: Arts Commission, which is staffed by the Recreation Department

**Overview:** Art in Public Spaces is a program designed to incorporate functional and infrastructural art to public and natural spaces through the transformation of everyday objects. The project is divided into five main programs: the Sculpture Program, ArtBox, Art Benches, Little Libraries Project, and the Public Outdoor Ping Pong Table (POPP) with decorative murals.

**Selection Criteria:** Selection prioritizes beautiful organic design and benches made from environmentally sustainable materials.

**Funding Source:** The project started with an annual budget of \$22,000 that has been allocated by the City. Organizers are also raising matching funds from a variety of sources.

**Value of the Award:** \$500 for an ArtBox. Benches are purchased by donors after designs have been completed and approved the Arts Commission through and open call.

# Appendix 6:

## Summary of Watertown Public Arts Collections

### Documentation of Current Public Arts Collection

Broadly speaking, public arts in Watertown fall into three categories, each with different implications for partnerships, funding, and coordination with a town-led public arts and culture program:

- **Public Arts in the Public Realm** includes arts in Watertown’s public streets, sidewalks, paths, and open space, encompasses the town’s arts and cultural events, murals, artistic wayfinding, and monuments and memorials. This category is the primary focus of this plan.
- **Public Arts in Public Buildings** encompasses architecture and decorative arts in public buildings, and art collections and installations managed and led by public entities including the Watertown Public Library and the Watertown Public Schools.
- **Public Arts in Privately-owned Spaces and Buildings** includes interior murals in private buildings accessible to the public, murals commissioned by developers or property owners for privately-owned buildings, and events and festivals managed and run by private arts and culture organizations or individuals.

### Public Arts in the Public Realm

Public Arts in the Public Realm is the primary focus of the Watertown Public Arts & Culture Committee, and their work has generated a number of new installations that build on the existing public arts and culture assets in town including the ongoing Summer Concert Series that brings free outdoor music performances to Saltonstall Park during the summer months.

## Murals

The murals and wayfinding elements generated by the WPACC have demonstrated the impact of public arts and community engagement. The three murals completed with oversight from the WPACC highlight important town assets: the linear park bike path and two key commercial areas in Watertown Square and Coolidge Square. Details about these projects are included as case studies in this report.



Title: A Bicycle Ride Through Watertown  
Location: Watertown Linear Park  
Lead Artist: Gregg Bernstein  
Date: 2013  
Youth Artists: Liana Aleksanyan, Sondos Alnamous, Faiza Amin, Marvin Aramthip, Isabella Carton, Julia Harrington, Emily Hart, Veronica Torres, Abigail Vershbow  
Donors: New England Foundation for the Arts, Athena Health, Watertown Savings Bank, Watertown Community Foundation and Myer Dana and Son



Title: A Tapestry of Cultures  
Location: Baptist Walk at Mount Auburn Street  
Lead Artist: Gregg Bernstein  
Date: 2014  
Youth Artists: Aaseia Ahmed, Liana Aleksanyan, Marvin Aramthip, Katy Bedig, Caitlyn D'Amico, Brianna Hache, Julia Harrington, Emily Hart, Sedra Katerji, Alain Mondesir, Svetlana Sheehan, Abigail Vershbow  
Donors: New England Foundation for the Arts, Athena Health, Watertown Savings Bank, Watertown Community Foundation and Myer Dana and Son

## Events and Festivals

Due to their ephemeral nature, events and festivals can be more challenging to inventory. They can also generate new connections with artists and performers, create opportunities to gauge community interest in different kinds of arts and cultural programming, and share information with community members. The annual Summer Concert Series is an arts and culture event that provides an opportunity for residents to experience music, performing arts, and buy crafts. It is complemented by the Winter Concert Series, run by the Watertown Free Public Library. The Faire on the Square is another example of a community-wide event that brings arts and culture together with family activities and local organizations and businesses to draw residents downtown.

## Monuments and Memorials

Watertown's prominent monuments and memorials have been documented through the Massachusetts Historical Commission's cultural resources inventory, which is available to the public through the searchable Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS).

Restoration of Watertown's monuments and memorials has been initiated through partnerships between the Town and the Historical Society of Watertown. The ongoing maintenance work provides opportunities for the Town to collaborate with local sculptors and art preservationists, as happened through the restoration of the Soldier's Monument in 2013. These partnerships can be strengthened through clarity on stewardship related to monitoring the condition and maintenance needs of the town's historic monuments and memorials.

Notable monuments include the Founders Monument located along Charles River Road and the Soldier's Monument on display in Saltonstall Park, whose renovation employed the local art conservation specialist Daedalus and local sculptor David LaRocca. Investment in the restoration of publicly owned monuments should be accompanied by an approach to review and address controversial sites and monuments such as the Columbus Delta Monument.

Title: Seeds of Change  
Location: Melendey Avenue at Mount Auburn Street  
Lead Artist: Gregg Bernstein  
Date: 2015  
Youth Artists: Aaseia Ahmed, Faryal Amin, James DeRocher, Sara Fulton, Brianna Hache, Julia Harrington, Emily Hart, Svetlana Sheehan, Abigail Vershbow, Isabella Vitti.  
Donors: Tufts Health Plan Foundation, Watertown Savings Bank, Watertown Community Foundation, Toyota/Lexus, Dunkin Donuts, Mark Investments, John Airasian



## **Public Arts in Public Buildings**

Watertown is also home to public art that includes the architectural features of public buildings, decorative arts on display within public buildings, and visual art collections and installations held by the public library and the public schools.

These public art assets fall outside the purview of the existing Public Arts & Culture Committee in terms of acquisition, maintenance, restoration, or deaccessioning.

## **Public Art in Architecture and Decorative Architectural Detailing**

Public art integrated into building facades and interiors is one type of public arts identified in the WPACK. A few of Watertown's historic public buildings feature artistic detailing through sculptural moldings and decorative elements. Perhaps the most prominent public building to feature such details is the Town Administration Building. These artistic assets located on historic buildings fall largely under the purview of the Watertown Historical Commission. The work of maintaining and restoring these resources requires access to the skills and talents of Watertown's creative community, and WPACK could be involved in identifying and hiring artists as needed for maintenance of historic architectural assets.

## **Public Library Collection**

In addition to the extensive collection of literary arts represented in the Watertown Free Public Library, the library also owns and curates a robust collection of fine and decorative artworks, including paintings, drawings, sculptures, bas reliefs, maps, and decorative items including stained glass and

a fireplace. These are kept on public display in the T. Ross Kelly Family Gallery and other locations throughout the building. Many of the works in the collection were donated to the library by the local artists who created them.

## **Public Arts in Public Schools**

The Watertown Public Schools have also commissioned commemorative artworks by Waltham-based artist Joshua Winer. These works are installed for public viewing inside the Watertown Middle School and Watertown High School. The Peter Clough Memorial is a mixed-media mobile hung in the Watertown Middle School to honor Peter Clough, a Global Studies teacher. The Meredith Kamm Memorial mural is a mixed-media mural installed in the lobby of the Watertown High School. A modular installation of the Tapestry of Cultures mural was created by student artists and artist Gregg Bernstein and is displayed in the library of the Watertown High School.

## **Public Arts in Privately-Owned, Public Spaces**

Watertown is also home to public arts commissioned by private entities and displayed on private properties as well as events and festivals organized and hosted by private organizations. Mount Auburn Cemetery is home to a wealth of artistic resources, including over one hundred and eighty monuments and memorials and public programming that highlights the many visual and literary artists buried in the grounds.

## **Murals**

- Watertown Past and Present Mural on the side of CVS building along Merchants Row.
- Town Diner Mural by Matthew J. Kraus (2011) at 627 Mount Auburn Street, in the center of the Coolidge Square business district complements the more recent Seeds of Change mural located at the western end of Coolidge Square.

- The Old Glory Mural on the New Yorker Diner at 39 Mount Auburn Street was a project initiated by a New York-based artist in response to the Boston Marathon bombings in 2013. It is a dramatic visual juxtaposition to the Tapestry of Cultures mural completed in 2014 along Bishop Walk across Mount Auburn Street.
- The newly finished Arsenal Yards murals by Louise “Ouizi” Jones, Kim Carlino, and Felipe Ortiz extend public arts into the southeast corner of Watertown within a half-mile of the Arsenal on the Charles, home to Watertown arts anchors the Mosesian Center for the Arts (MCA) and the New Repertory Theatre.
- The MCA has worked with property owners and installed several temporary outdoor murals in highly visible locations along Arsenal Street and in surrounding communities.

## Events and Festivals

A variety of events and festivals are organized and hosted by private entities in Watertown. Cultural festivals include two annual Armenian Festivals in June and September and a Grecian Festival fundraiser for the Taxiarchae/Archangels Greek Orthodox Church in June. Arts and culture events and festivals organized by local organizations include events at the MCA and the Plumbing Museum’s inaugural WATERtown FilmFest of 2019). The MCA provides several free festivals every year - including First Day, a family indoor festival, Arts for All Festival, including an inclusive experience for participants of differing abilities, and also educational events and movies on critical community topics. In 2008 the MCA curated the temporary outdoor art exhibit *Nature and Balance* on the Arsenal site, and has produced exhibits open to the public at Boston Biomedical (formerly on Grove Street), Watertown Savings Bank, and other private venues.

## Monuments and Memorials

Mount Auburn Cemetery is largely situated within Watertown although its main entrance is located in Cambridge. The cemetery is historically significant as the first rural cemetery in the country, serving as both a burial ground and an educational and recreational resource. Its significance is recognized by its designation as a National Historic Landmark. Within the cemetery is a vast collection of artistic assets in the architectural design, landscape design, and sculptural elements the comprise many of the cemetery’s commemorations of those buried in its grounds. It has catalogued those resources with significance to the arts and has initiated an artist residency program to ensure that “the nature and history of Mount Auburn continue to offer inspiration.” The 2018-2019 residency culminated in the presentation in a two-part series of site-specific plays by playwright Patrick Gabridge: “The Nature Plays,” presented in June 2019 and “The America Plays” presented in September 2019.

Other monuments and memorials have been commissioned in Watertown by private entities. A notable example is the set of two memorial khachkars at St. Stephen’s Armenian Church and St. Hagop’s Armenian Church, which memorialize the 1915 Armenian genocide by the Ottoman Empire and anchors of an annual memorial procession between the two churches.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.armenian-genocide.org/Memorial.128/current\\_category.75/offset.40/memorials\\_detail.html](https://www.armenian-genocide.org/Memorial.128/current_category.75/offset.40/memorials_detail.html); [https://www.armenian-genocide.org/Memorial.127/current\\_category.75/offset.40/memorials\\_detail.html#memorial\\_image](https://www.armenian-genocide.org/Memorial.127/current_category.75/offset.40/memorials_detail.html#memorial_image)